# THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by AUSTIN HARRISON

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SEPTEMBER 1922


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THE

ENGLISH REVIEW

SEPTEMBER, 1922.

# The Fen

By Dorothy Wellesley

THE long horizons flat and wide,
Where gulls unscared may cry:
God stretched the Fen at eventide
Across a crocus sky.

Whence he who fears his dreams shall flee,
Flee far; but ever more
Return again to hear the sea
Boom on the Dutchman's Bore;

To see the clouds combed light and loose
Above the windy lea,
To stand again where Denver Sluice
Holds up the Northern Sea;

To hear the spring-tides swell and swash
Along the arid shore,
Until the voices of the Wash
Gather against the Bore;

To stand below and feel the weight,
To hear the rising roar,
As champing waters by the Gate
Churn up the ocean floor,

Till that sedition bursting free,
Musters and huddles high,
And on the shuddering Fen the sea
Swirls downward from the sky.

* * * * *



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There beacon points: steeples and vanes,
Long built by lonely men,
And sturdy towers, and crumbling fanes,
Aspire above the Fen.

There field-birds from the Fenland isles
Through the late luminous hours,
With sea-birds from a thousand miles
Sprinkle round Ely Towers.

There pollards stand like dwarfs at prayer,
Or twisted acrobats,
With arms raised skyward in despair
Across the flooded flats.

There waiting for the windy spring,
Through the long winter falls,
The little drowning houses cling
About the manor walls,

And miles on miles of meadows wake
With blare and blaze of pomp,
And buttercups and kingcups make
One gold, gigantic swamp,

And round the carts with old reed-loads
The black dust clouds ascend
Along those dark, eternal roads,
Beyond the evening's end.

And there, like free and noble thought,
White windmills, swinging fair,
Tell on the work that man has wrought,
To all the wandering air.

There by the dykes at term of day,
The traveller may behold
Cattle at graze against the grey,
Fat geese against the gold;

Till on the silence of that plain
A deeper calm is shed,
And all the marsh becomes again
The Fenland of the dead,



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The airy gay, the light blue day,
Long years ere he was born,
When full-rigged, four-mast schooners lay
Snugly along the corn;

Till he, so wandering, half at loss,
Shall mark nor house nor tree,
But centuried ghosts that cry across
That bled and beaten sea.

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# Thoughts on Passing Some Houses near Maida Vale

By Desmond Harmsworth

Ye are the poor; yours is the sere, the old,
The half-forgotten life. O never-free,
Ye toil and pinch apace to keep your hold
Upon a drab respectability.
Ye live apart from life, in a time out-worn,
Far from the city's pulsing heart, recess'd
Amid Time's relics faded and forlorn:
Yet ye are rich, O rich, and ever blest!
For lo, methinks I heard the voice of Spring
Chant in your boughs, amid your London air.
Did I not hear young birds their matins sing,
And see the foaming blossoms of the pear
Filling your gardens with the scents of May?
Heralds of Summer! O I saw cascades
Of lissom birch trees, with their emerald spray
Painting your world with hues of vernal glades.

O rest awhile from sweeping of your floors;
O rest ye weary hearts. Arise and see
How Beauty's minions burgeon at your doors
And make a very gem by Spring's old alchymy!



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# Man Seeks to Cage Delight

By Martin Armstrong

Man seeks to cage delight
In vain, not seeing
That her strong-pinioned flight
Is all her being,
And sets about to frame
Dead fantasies—
Eternity, Infinity—to tame
The ecstasy that flies:

And vexed by bonds of Space,
By veils of Time,
He dreams a special grace,
A power sublime,
In these abstractions, vain
Unbodied signs,
Frail shadows of the ecstasy and pain
With which Orion shines,

With which the rose unwinds
Each scented fold,
With which Man grows and finds
The note of gold
Hid in the heart of laughter,
Heart of sighs,
In measured golden music flying after
The golden voice that flies,

In love from marble wrought,
In love that chimes
Over clear-ringing thought
And well-tuned rhymes,
In love become a fact
Keen, swift, and fell,
When the whole self leaps forward to the act
Clean as the whistling shell.



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For when the body and mind,
Fused in one fire,
Leap, like tiger on hind,
On the one desire,
Then the careful thoughts and schemes
Of barren years
Go down into the pit of ruined dreams
And crumbling hopes and fears.

For to be single, sure,
In one swift flash,
Pure flame or diamond pure;
To slough the ash
Of things burnt out; to gain
The fountain's powers
Gathered in little compass to attain
Its crown of glittering showers;

This is the eternal, this
The infinite,
The gods' immortal kiss
Set warm and bright
On heroes' brows.
In these brief moments' span
Shall Man outlive the thousand centuries
Of the blind life of Man.

Therefore when I am sunk
To earth again
And thirsty earth has drunk
My joy and pain,
I shall not know or need
Pity or praise
Or thanks or love from you, the human seed
Sprung out of later days:

For on the burning crest
Of great extremes
Where the soul meets breast to breast
Its highest dreams,
Safe from stern fate's decrees
Irrevocably
I have possessed and savoured to the lees
My own eternity.



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# Thoughts on Dostoevsky's "Idiot"

By Hermann Hesse

*Translated by* Stephen Hudson *

Dostoevsky's Idiot, Prince Lyov Myshkin, has often been compared with Christ. Of course, such a comparison can be made. One can compare with the Saviour every man who lays bare magical truth, who no longer separates thought from life and who on that account lives a life of solitude among hostile neighbours. From that point of view there seems to be no great likeness between Myshkin and Jesus. Only one trait in Myshkin's character, but that an important one, appears to me as Christlike. I allude to his timid, morbid purity. The secret fear of sex and of procreation is a trait which must be reckoned with in the message of Christ, for it plays a distinct part in his world mission. Even the superficial portrait of Jesus by Renan does not entirely overlook this feature.

But it is curious—little as I sympathise with the constant comparison between Myshkin and Christ—that I also see the two intermingled in some strange fashion. This occurred to me only latterly and in connection with a point of comparative insignificance. It came into my mind one day, while I was thinking of The Idiot, that my first thought of him was always an apparently secondary one. In the first flash of my imagination, I always see him in one particular minor side-scene, in itself not specially significant. And so it is with Christ. When any association suggests to me a presentation of Jesus, or when the word of Christ meets my ear or my eye, then I never see Him on the Cross or in the desert, or as a miracle-worker or as a raiser of the dead. I see Him in that moment when he drinks the cup of solitude to the dregs in the Garden

* Mr. Stephen Hudson was the translator of the article "The Downfall of Europe" published in the August number.



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of Gethsemane, when His soul is torn by the agony of death through which He must pass to His higher birth, and how He then, in a last moving and childlike longing for comfort, turns to His disciples. He turns to them for a little human warmth, for a fleeting illusion of affection in the midst of His bitter loneliness. He turns to them—and the disciples are asleep. There lie excellent Peter and beautiful John; they are all asleep together, these worthy men, about whom Christ in His goodness has experienced disappointments over and over again. He has shared His thoughts with them as though they understood His words, as though it were in actual fact possible to communicate His thoughts to such as these, to arouse in them something like a vibration of kinship, something akin to understanding, to relationship, to unity with Himself. And now, in the moment of unbearable torment, He turns to these few comrades He has. He is so utterly human, so utterly alone, so utterly the Man of Suffering, that He would now approach them as never before, to find some poor solace, some poor support in any stupid word they might utter, even in a friendly gesture. But no, they are not even there—they are sleeping—snoring.

This cruel moment, in what way I know not, seared itself into my mind in early youth, and when I think of Jesus, unfailingly it springs into my memory.

The parallel with Myshkin is this. When I think of The Idiot, an apparently unimportant moment bursts upon me in the same way. In that case also the moment is one of incredible isolation, of tragic solitude. The scene I have in mind is that evening in Paslovsk in the Lebedyev's house, when the prince, convalescent, some days after his epileptic attack, receives the visit of the whole Epanchin family. Into this society, serene and elegant, in spite of tensions and hidden fires beneath, there suddenly bursts a band of young revolutionaries and nihilists. The wretched youth Ippolit, with the pretended " Son of Pavlishtchev," with the " Boxer " and the other individual, make their appearance. Then comes that disagreeable, repellent scene, a scene which one reads with equal excitement and disgust. These shallow-minded and misled youths stand upon the stage, naked in their helpless malignity. Every single one of their words inflicts a double



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pain upon Myshkin, the pain of their effect upon himself and the pain caused by the revelation of their own souls through every word they utter. This strange and unforgettable scene, though not in itself particularly weighty, is the one to which I referred. On the one side a company of elegant people, people of the world, rich, powerful, and conservative. On the other, the raging young anarchists, inexorable in their hostility, caring only to gratify their spite against everything that exists, with consideration for no one, and, in spite of their rhetorical pretence of intellectuality, wild, foolish, trashy. Between these two parties the prince, alone, exposed to the fire of both, regarded with equal distrust by both. And how does the situation end? Myshkin, in spite of small mistakes, due to his agitation, reveals his sweet, tender, childlike nature. He smilingly accepts affront and insult, answers the most shameless with a Christlike selflessness, is ready to accept all the fault, to take upon himself all the blame and exactly in such a way as to incur the full weight of odium, displeasure, and contempt from both sides—not from one side or the other—but from both. All turn away from him, for he has trodden on the toes of all. One moment more and the extremest social antagonisms, differences in ages and opinions are wiped out. All are completely united in a common resentment against the single clean one amongst them.

Upon what turns the impracticability of a being such as The Idiot in this world? Why does no one understand this man, whom almost all somehow or other love, whose tenderness is so sympathetic to all as to lead to a sort of transfiguration? What separates this magical creature from ordinary men? Why are they right when they turn aside from him? Why must they necessarily do so? Why must he be like Christ, who was deserted not only by the world, but even by His own disciples?

It is because The Idiot thinks other thoughts than the rest of the world. It is not because his thinking is less logical or more childlike than theirs. His thinking is that which I call " magical." This compassionate Idiot denies the whole of Life, all thinking and feeling, all that the world and reality mean to others. For him Reality is something entirely different than for them. Their Reality is for



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him a shadow. For that reason, because he sees and offers a new Reality, he becomes the enemy.

The difference is not that they esteem highly such values as power and wealth, family and state, and that he does not. It is not that he stands for the Spirit, while they stand for the Material, or whatever way one likes to put it. That is not the reason. For The Idiot, too, material concerns matter; he invariably recognises the significance of such things, even though he does not consider them of prime importance. His gospel is not an ascetic-Indian ideal, a dying to the world of apparent reality to make the joy of the immortal soul which alone shall know Truth.

No, Myshkin would readily come to an understanding with other people regarding the mutual claims of Nature and Spirit and on the necessity of their working together.

It is simply that while the simultaneity and equivalue of both worlds is for them an intellectual concept, for him these considerations constitute Life and Reality.

This is not clear. Let us try to elucidate the matter.

Myshkin is different from others because, as an Idiot and an epileptic who is at the same time an exceptionally clever man, he has much closer and less obscure relationships with the Unconscious. He has had rare instants of intuitive perception, occasional seconds of transcendant exaltation. For a lightning moment he has felt the all-being, the all-feeling, the all-suffering, the all-understanding. He has known all that is in the world. There lies the kernel of his magical being. He has not studied and is not endowed with mystical wisdom, he has not even aspired to it. He has simply experienced the thing itself. He has not merely had occasional significant thoughts and ideas. He has literally, once and more than once, stood on the magic borderland where everything is affirmed, where not only the remotest thought is true, but also the contrary of such thought.

That is the fearful part of it, that is the part of him rightly feared by others. He does not stand quite alone, not all the world is against him. There are a few people, very doubtful, risky, dangerous people, who stand in close relationship to him. Rogozhin, Nastasya. He is understood by criminals and by hystericals; he, the innocent,



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the gentle child. But this child is not so soft as he seems. His innocence is not so harmless, and men are rightly in awe of him.

The Idiot is, as I said, from time to time near that borderland where every thought and its opposite are equally true. That is, he has an intuitive perception that no thought, no law, no mould, no form exist which are true and right, except as regarded from one pole—and every pole has its opposite. The situation of a pole, the taking up, that is to say, of a position from which to view and order the world, is the first stage in the foundation of every cultural form, of every society and morality. Whosoever considers Spirit and Nature, Spirit and Freedom, Good and Evil as interchangeable, if only for a moment, is the deadliest foe of every order of civilisation. For there begins the contrary of Order; there begins Chaos.

A line of thought which turns back to the Unconscious, to Chaos, disturbs every human system of order. It was once said to The Idiot that it was lamentable he no longer told only the truth. So it was. Truth is everything. It is possible to say " Yes " to everything. But, to order the world, to achieve material results, to render possible Law, Society, Organisation, Culture, and Morality, No must follow Yes. The world must be polarised, it must be divided against itself into Good and Evil. Establish every " No," every prohibited thing, every wickedness upon a foundation sufficiently solid to make it accepted law, and as soon as such law is enforced, as soon as it becomes the basis of a new mode of viewing things, a new order, it equally becomes absolute and sacred.

Highest Reality in the sense of human culture is the division of the World into Light and Dark, Good and Evil, Allowed and Forbidden. Highest Reality for Myshkin is the magical experience of the reversibility of all institutional forms, of the existence of a negative equivalent to all moral values. The Idiot, finally considered, introduces the Mother-claim of the Unconscious, he is the blaster of Civilisation. He does not break the Tables of the Law, he simply turns them round and shows that the contrary to them is written on the other side.

It is the secret of this terrifying book that this enemy of Order, this fearful destroyer, does not appear as a



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malefactor, but as a charming, shy creature full of childlike grace, full of warm-hearted, unselfish goodness. Dostoevsky drew upon the depths of his imagination when he made this man a diseased epileptic. All Dostoevsky's harbingers of a new and fearful and sinister future, all his forerunners of Chaos, are enigmatic, burdened with pain and disease, Rogozhin, Nastasya, the four Karamazoffs. All are represented as strange, exceptional beings, but in such a way that their eeriness and soul-sickness inspire that sort of awed veneration that the Asiatics feel for the insane. The remarkable and peculiar thing is not that a genial epileptic of between fifty and sixty years of age had such fantasies and made an epic of them. The significant, the ominous consideration is that during three decades the youth of Europe has more and more been accepting these books as full of prophetic gravity. Another strange thing is that we look these criminals, hystericals, and idiots of Dostoevsky in the face in quite a different way from that in which we regard the criminals or fools in other novels, even in novels we have affection for. It is strange and uncanny to realise that in some curious way we love these bad people, to realise that there must be in us something akin to them, something that is like them.

This does not come about by chance, and still less is it anything to do with the obvious and literary in Dostoevsky's work. Puzzling as are certain of his characteristics—consider only the way he bears one forward towards a solidly constructed psychology of the Unconscious—we are not surprised at his work being the finished expression of a highly developed insight, nor at its artistic interpretation of a daily world with which we are thoroughly familiar. What actually impresses us is its prophetic import, its foreshadowing of a disintegration and of a chaos into which we have during these last years seen Europe obviously descending. It is not as though this world of Dostoevsky's were a picture of the future in an ideal sense. No one will accept it as that. No, we do not feel that Myshkin and the rest afford us a prefiguration in the sense of " This is what you must become." It is something different, but fully as significant: " We must pass through this. This is our Destiny."

The future is uncertain, but the road which he shows



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can have but one meaning. It means a new spiritual dispensation. This takes us beyond Myshkin, it points towards magical thinking, to the acceptance of Chaos, to a return to anarchy, back into the unconscious, into formlessness, into the beast, back far beyond the beast, back to the beginnings of everything. Not to stay there, not to become beast or primeval matter, but to start in a fresh direction, to discover new springs of development and action deep down in the roots of our being, in order to reach to a higher and nobler creation and valuation and division of the world. No programme can teach us to find this road, no revolution will cast down the walls that we may enter into it. Each one must approach it alone, each one for himself. Each one of us must in one hour of his life stand on the threshold of the borderland where Myshkin stood, where truths cease and new ones begin. Each one of us must once, for one moment in his life, experience something of what Myshkin experienced in his flashlight seconds, of what Dostoevsky himself experienced in that moment when he stood facing his condemnation, and, with prophetic vision, took his way onward.



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# Sir Perseus and the Fair Andromeda (iv)

By Robert Nichols

UNA'S breviary lay where it had fallen upon the lawn. Andromeda snatched the thing up. It contained a whole world of pretty and grotesque illustrations—wayside flowers, a skeleton making fun of a monk while lords and ladies danced, demons pitchforking an all-too naked and protesting rabble into a fiery cauldron, a gracious damsel (singularly like Una herself) receiving among obsequious courtiers a crown at the hands of an archbishop. Round the borders of the bright black text splay-eared hares pursued a fox, or a griffon was seen to fly from before a plump little hermit who skirled upon bagpipes. On the last page a young bearded prince, silent harp in hand, watched with considerable satisfaction from his castellated turret a lady enjoying her tub in the shrubbery of the garden next door.

"Hypocrites!" repeated Andromeda. "Northern hypocrites!" And, seizing the unfortunate Amor by the curls, she shook him, crying vehemently, "Will you not listen, you little brat? What has come over you in the North? Have you no decency or propriety left? People do not know how to behave themselves here, and you smile at it. They are not honest, I tell you! Not honest! They pretend! These islanders, all these northerners: they have appetites and they call them love. They do not know what love is. And you do not know, either, to encourage such things. You have forgotten yourself." And, tilting him forward, she began to smack the traditional seat of repentance, if not of propriety, but stopped suddenly, for she perceived Sir Lancelot, stroking his chin, at watch in an alley.

"That will not cure him," cried the knight, laughing gaily. "What is bred in the bone——!" He turned away.



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She was minded to run after him and pour out her woes, her sense of outrage, her indignation . . . but as she stepped forward the sack-cloth caught in the bow projecting between the boy's knees. The figure rocked. An arrow slid from the quiver, and, glancing upon her bare foot, drew blood. She uttered a little cry, picked up the arrow, broke it and dashed it in the stony face.

"So!" she said, "he laughed, did he? Very well. I understand. The dwarf shall have my hair."

* * * * * *

"It is very pretty," said Andromeda, with scissors poised, "but it is not pretty enough. I require one thing more—that I be permitted to dance alone before the court."

"But——"

"I have said. Do not argue with a woman."

"But I must have your hair. I have promised it."

"Promised it?"

"I have promised it to myself, and there is no one whom I would less willingly disappoint."

"That or nothing."

"It will need stratagem!"

He mused. At last he inquired, "Do you object to appearing as an edible?"

"What?"

"*Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie.*" He pirouetted.

"Me?—a princess?—in a pie?"

"All is conditional in this lamentable world. That or nothing."

"But——"

"You will be borne in by ten varlets dressed as bears. I will inform their majesties that you impersonate the Spirit of the North, and thus they will reconcile themselves to your dancing in raiment suggestive of hyperborean denudation."

"But I will not represent the Spirit of the North!" she stamped. "I loathe and hate the North."

"There I am with you—I, the dwarf, the hump-back jester, whom everybody mocks. I am lame—and I dream of riding naked on horseback among beautiful companions through green valleys where stand no ghastly calvaries, past caves and cliffs untenanted by pestiferous hermits,



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under skies which radiate profound and perpetual joy. I have a cracked voice—and I dream of following the harp-bearing magician Orpheus among friendly animals into the arcades of sunny woods, where harpies with witching faces and the plumage of parrots, stooping from boughs hung with red and golden apples, shall join in our singing. I am hunchback—and I dream of being fondled by——"

"I understand you. Say no more. In a pie. So be it."

"The varlets will set you down before the dais. You will rise like the chick from its shard, like the sudden crocus from its spikes, like imperial Venus from her shell."

"You have won." The first tress flew to the floor and lay in the sunlight more golden than gold.

* * * * * *

Twilight approached; a fever burned in the sky; the pinnacles of Camelot became flames; multitudes of starlings fled past with rushing of wings. Andromeda, surveying in her mirror the hair which framed her face like a page's, remarked, "It has only made me younger than ever."

Una, entering, stopped amazed.

"I thought I would tell you, dearest, that I am betrothed to Sir Perseus."

"I congratulate you, darling—and I, I am going to dance."

And, casting her arms wide, she spun so swiftly that the green silk film floated up out beneath her hands and encircled her bosom like a sidereal aureole.

It was warm within the pie.

At length the musicians struck up. The prison-house was lifted. The triumphant progress began. She heard going before her squealing of pipes; close at hand a pulsing of tabrets and the shuffle of servitors.

The cavalcade stopped. There was a clapping of hands.

"Aphrodite is with me," said Andromeda to herself. Sonorous trumpets resounded immediately above her head.

The moment was come. She flung back the pie-crust. She stepped forth. Scarcely did she glimpse beneath the torches smoking on the walls confused figures heaped along



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the trellis tables, for in a moment she achieved that subjective remoteness from surroundings, that identification with the moving thread of abstract rhythm which is the sign and the reward of the true dancer. At the first gesture of the arm, the first light fall of the foot, she discovered herself established in that other world, where the pure movement of the body becomes a creational act through which an idea, rising from behind consciousness and travelling beyond reason, realises itself so completely as to produce in the spirit an exaltation and peace resembling nothing less than an intuition of identification with the vital thrust of Nature's own intelligence. Not for nothing had Cassiope, the Greek, caused her daughter to be instructed in the art which of all arts is the most limited in means, the most infinite in purport. There are souls that cannot rise to their apogee but in the solitary dance, and such a soul was Andromeda's. For her dancing contained in fusion twin utmost pleasures born of simultaneous participation in two universes, whose bounds have never been defined, but which wheel about such contrary poles as the Real and the Abstract, Definition and Interpretation, Science and Mysticism. " He who dances," her greybeard instructor had said, " philosophises. And of all philosophies the dancer's is the soundest, for it combines the precision of geometry (by which alone its form is demonstrable) with the capacity of pure mathematics, the sensual pleasure and final satisfaction of empiric experiment with the ethereal delight and unending ambition of metaphysics: all without anything to which any savant save those—alack! too many—who have never danced, can take exception. The dance, my dear, is perhaps the profoundest of the arts—the art to which all the other arts strive to approximate. In it sculpture attains that variability of motion it can otherwise but only suggest; poetry that release from the wholly explicit which clogs its wings; painting that realisation in a third plane which it cannot approach, save through the trickery of illusion; music a redemption from the purely abstract. Nor is the dance solely an illustration of a particular philosophic concept of the Cosmos. To the true dancer—above all to the dancer in the Greek style —it is at once a realisation and exposition of the ideal way of life, since it not only supplies mind and soul with an



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illustration of the Nature of Things, but instructs us how to live that life that is most fitting."

Andromeda danced. The divine blitheness of a being at harmony with itself and conscious that this self is at harmony with the universe filled her wholly. Never had her limbs seemed so light and their exercise so much and so perfectly the realisation of her complete self in act. It was almost with reluctance that at last she moved to the climax: the display of the creative means in apotheosis—at tension, but immobile after so much motion. Before the daïs, before the eyes of the accounted greatest knight—the whole man as he must be, a master of all the nobler activities: of war, of counsel, of the arts and sciences—she would rend the green film from bosom to hem, thus to display to him, tense, triumphant, and poised absolutely still upon tip-toe, the divine instrument that was herself and worthy of the only art which necessitates a partner—the topmost of all, the Art of Love. . . .

With eyes over which the lids had fallen—because the greatest art must even keep about it some hint of the dream, some air of the inexplicitness of memory, some suggestion of the most unfathomable riddle—she approached the daïs, and as she moved her whole figure remained tense, like an arrow that, standing upright upon its golden barb, is wafted by the care of unseen hands across a sheet of ice.

She stopped.

The sound of the tabret died away. . . .

Slowly and beautifully, her somnambulistic hands rose to the valley of her bosom. The film parted with the sound of a sigh.

An instant clamour broke out: "Witch! Sorceress! Devil!" Sir Galahad could be heard screaming "Harlot! Succubus! Devil's daughter!"

She lifted the lids to behold maniacal faces about her: faces in which the eyes burned with rage—and with another emotion.

"Northern swine! Filth! Satyrs!" she cried. "I appeal to thee, O King!"

But the King did not appear to hear. He was far too busy attempting to restrain Sir Galahad.

"To thee, O Queen!"

But the Queen did not even raise her eyes. Head



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leaned on hands, she was gazing with a strange expression into a goblet of crystal filled with golden wine, while Sir Lancelot, leaning forward, fixed a devouring glance on her profile and caressed a lock of her orichalcian hair. . . .

Feeling the eyes of the assembly upon them both, he abruptly sought to disentangle his fingers. The lock dropped on to the board.

Andromeda's eyes blazed. Her fingers curled like the claws of a cat. Her very hair seemed to bristle on her head. "Vampire!" she shrieked. "Slut! Adulteress! Even her hair is false! That is my hair, she is using my hair to entangle him!"

And, seizing a platter, she flung it at the Queen. Then, leaping over the table, she sought to scratch the Queen's cheeks, pull her hair, spit in her eye, according to those ageless canons of the Mediterranean temperament which, in the exuberance of love and jealousy, sway alike the conduct of peasant woman and of princess.

* * * * * *

When the terrible scene was over—a scene in which Northern rancour and hauteur battled somewhat unsuccessfully with the directness and warmth of expression native to the South—Andromeda found herself in a dungeon. Utterly worn out, she relapsed into a profound slumber.

The cell door opened. She beheld a crouching figure in a friar's robe with the cowl drawn down over the face. The gaoler withdrew. The door closed.

The silent figure standing in the gloom frightened her.

"What do you want?"

From within the cowl a ghostly voice replied, "Sister in God, do you repent of your most grievous sin?" She shivered and said nothing.

The crouching figure came closer. "Sister in God, do you repent of your most grievous sin?"

She presented her back.

The figure spoke in her ear, "Sister in God——" Some depth of irony in the ghostly voice made her turn her face. She received a most unghostly salutation.

"Lancelot!" she cried.

The shoulders of the figure began to shake. She lifted the cowl. "You!"

It was the jester.



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She began to weep.

" Sssh ! " said he. " Certes, there is no time to lose and tears will not extinguish a flame—either mine or yours. I love you, and to-morrow at dawn you will be publicly burned on several excellent counts, which certain of Christ's pet particular children, brothers in the Church of Love, have drawn up—to wit, that you are a witch, that you have committed high treason, that you are a danger to the chastity of Camelot and have traduced the good name of the Queen and of Sir Lancelot, who, as everybody knows, must be a good knight, because the King has never been heard to doubt him. Listen. . . ."

The sound of a dull hammering came to her ears.

" The stake is being erected."

" Burned ! "

" Yes. But it is not necessary. All is conditional in this world. Quench this flame and escape the other."

" I do not understand you."

He produced from beneath his gown a friar's robe and a file.

" It is simple. You don this gear, you use the file, you meet me, and——"

" But why should you do this for me? "

" All is conditional in this world. One has always a choice. I leave you to make yours."

" Never !—a hunchback ! And I in whom is incarnated all the wholesomeness, sanity, and beauty of Greece ! Ah, no, no, no ! I had rather be burned."

He hid the file and robe beneath a pile of straw, saying, " I shall be by the Amor at dusk."

* * * * * *

She was alone again.

The thudding of the hammers continued. . . .

Two pairs of feet halted without the grating. She knew those soft yellow leather shoes, and was granted opportunity to observe one of them impinge upon a white silken ankle emerging from beneath the hem of a blue cotte.

" Much grieved am I," said the voice of Sir Perseus, " that after so dire an encounter of mine on her behalf this damsel should so fall away. In sooth, I deem her no witch, but one upon whom an unfortunate spell has been laid. Natheless, for the honour of the court . . ."



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Ensued an interlude in which lips would seem to have shared that parley which is so much more moving than any words.

" Poor damsel, I pity her," Una's voice began. " She knew no better and I believe she loved you. Who could help loving you? "

" Far be it from me," replied Sir Perseus, " to assert that which I am unable to prove. I have no lust in boasting, but aboard the *St. George*, while we passed the Island of Giants . . . yet was my heart otherwhere, and——"

Another interlude.

" Well, let us to the King," Sir Perseus' voice at last resumed. " Perchance, if we plead with him, she may yet be saved from the present fire and the fire to come. Hard fare and rough raiment——"

The feet and the voices passed away.

" I will not be pitied and I will not be saved, and, above all, I will not wear sack-cloth," cried Andromeda, stooping for the file.

" There is no need to hurry," said the dwarf, " we have the whole night to travel in. Meanwhile, since all is conditional and the guards are within my hail. . . . "

Amor, his face in shadow, seemed to be weeping. . . .

(*To be continued.*)



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# The Question of Admitting Canadian Stores

By Captain Wedgwood Benn, D.S.O., D.F.C., M.P.

THE agricultural expert, the Free Trade theorist, the lover of animals, the neo-Imperialist, and the Plain Man (who sees a simple issue in a simple way), each had his inexpugnable stronghold in the debate on the question of Canadian Cattle. The horrors of disease were explained and the moral certainty of its arrival; the interest of the consumer was emphasised and the demonstrable present advantage of free exchange with possible fruitful developments; the sufferings of live beasts in ocean transport were recounted; the trade foundations of a great self-sufficient Empire were outlined; the pledged word was instanced—these were the rival positions. The usual allegiance of political forces being dissolved, the cohesion of the new allies was weak, but a mere counting of heads left little doubt that in the issue the ports and towns would prevail over the countryside, and a divided countryside at that.

A short history will explain the case. Sixty years ago we began protective legislation for our herds. Men realised the advantage of the "moat," the value of insularity as a defence against foreign pestilence as against foreign foes. The Act of 1894 embodied the view. All animals were to be slaughtered at the port of landing, except:

(*a*) Foreign animals the landing of which is for the time being prohibited by Order of the Board of Agriculture;
(*b*) Foreign animals the landing of which is allowed by Order of the Board without being subject under the provisions of this Act to slaughter or quarantine; and
(*c*) Foreign animals intended for exhibition or other exceptional purposes, and the landing of which is allowed for the time being by the Board subject to the provisions of Part II. (quarantine) of the Third Schedule to this Act.

In point of fact the discretion allowed to the Board of Agriculture under subhead (*b*) was exercised solely in favour of beasts from Canada, and after the appearance of a suspected case of pleuro-pneumonia from that source an



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invidious discretion was surrendered without resistance, and the present Act of 1896 abolishing the said subsection (*b*) was passed.

For some years no one challenged the new position, but in May, 1901, by which time 100,000 Canadian fat cattle (which of course could still be imported for slaughter) had been landed without a single case of disease having been reported, a movement began for the restoration of the *status quo*. In 1902 the question was raised on the King's Speech. In 1903 a Bill was introduced, but at this time the opposing forces were strong. For instance, Scotland, to-day almost wholly in favour of removing the embargo, was then for exclusion. In 1906, with the advent of a Liberal Government, agitation was renewed, but Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman declined to take sides. It was a Liberal Minister who had introduced the Act of 1896, and the Nationalist Party, then in alliance with the Liberal Party, were naturally opposed to a change which must have created competition with the Irish exporters of stores. In 1908 Mr. Asquith declared the position to be unchanged, and until the outbreak of war the Government steadily refused to budge.

The war and the submarine made great changes. There was on the one hand the possibility of increased feeding facilities for lean cattle, and on the other the fear of a meat shortage. The Canadian Ministers made use of these vantage points. Ever since 1896 the Dominion had forwarded through the Governor-General periodic protests from the Privy Council, the House of Commons, and the Senate. Sir Wilfred Laurier had already raised the question, and Mr. Rogers brought it forward again at the Imperial Conference in 1917, at which Mr. Walter Long, essentially a representative of British agriculture, presided. I quote the relevant passage from this debate because, though well known, it is important, for it is the passage on which the Plain Man takes his stand.

Mr. Prothero said: ". . . As far as I personally am concerned, and so far as the English Board of Agriculture is concerned, after the war is over, of course, because it is not an economical mode of bringing meat to this country during the war to bring over live animals, we should, I consider, be wise to remove the embargo. We do not believe that there is now, or has been, for a good many years past, the slightest ground to exclude Canadian cattle on the score of disease. . . ."

Mr. Walter Long said: ". . . As far as I am concerned, my name



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has been brought into it, I can only say that I entirely agree with Mr. Prothero's policy. I think the time that has elapsed has shown that Canada has had a complete and clean bill of health during that time. . . . Now the position is that the restriction is to be removed, and the Board of Agriculture will take such steps as are necessary for this purpose. . . ."

Mr. Rogers: "Do you not think we should have a Resolution about it?"

Mr. Walter Long: "You do not want a Resolution, do you?—or if you like you can simply move that the embargo on Canadian cattle be removed as speedily as possible."

Mr. Rogers: "I beg to move that."

Mr. Walter Long: "Mr. Prothero accepts that, and there is an end to it."—(*Appendix II.*, p. 5, *Royal Commission on Importation of Store Cattle.*)

How far were Mr. Prothero and the Government definitely committed? In subsequent correspondence the "pledge" was whittled down, but as by that time the Dominion statesmen were firmly convinced that it was absolute and binding, and had said so in public, the later explanations are not of much account from this aspect. More to the point was a reply given to Sir Hamar Greenwood only a month after the debate in the Conference—May 25th, 1917—

The prohibition cannot, as I am advised by the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Board, be justified on the ground of health, and cattle bred and reared in Canada and leaving that country for the first time by direct shipment to a British port ought not to be excluded under the Diseases of Animals Act, 1896. I cannot say whether, or under what conditions, Canadian cattle, as defined above, might hereafter be permitted to enter this country except for slaughter at the ports. At present, when farmers at home are being asked to reduce their livestock, permission is plainly impossible. But the prohibition rests rather on the agricultural policy of the United Kingdom than on the risk of diseases from which, for many years, Canada herself has been most remarkably, if not entirely, free.

The recent history is merely a monotonous pattern of deputations and public meetings studded with two events of importance. In March, 1921, a new President of the Board of Agriculture was appointed—Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen. In the necessary bye-election the Embargo question was much debated and the issue, no doubt, distorted and magnified. The Minister was defeated. That was in March. It was necessary to overcome the new obstacle and to find him a seat. A Royal Commission was accordingly promised. The President was returned in May, the Commission sat and reported in August.

The two important questions as to price and disease, *i.e.*, the farmers' and the consumers' points, were answered as follows:—



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(2) We think that such admission would tend to cheapen, in some measure, the meat supply of the country, but there are no data on which the extent can be accurately gauged. We think, in the long run, the tendency would be to bring prices to a level somewhat, but not greatly, lower than that which would prevail if the embargo were maintained.

(5) We are of opinion that there is no substantial ground for the apprehension that such admission would introduce disease among the cattle in this country.

(8) We find that there is a general feeling among English farmers against the admission of Canadian stores. So far as this is created by the apprehension that disease may thereby be introduced, we consider it is unfounded. So far as it is based on the view that the prohibition should be kept up for the protection of the home breeding industry against competition, we do not think that the question of such a policy falls under the terms of our reference. As we have pointed out, the cost of transport to England in itself forms a considerable measure of protection to the home breeder.—(*Report of His Majesty's Commissioners on the Importation of Store Cattle.*)

A clean bill of health for twenty-five years, the "pledge," and the report of a highly-qualified Royal Commission might have been supposed to settle the question. They have, in fact, done so, though the opposition is still obstinate.

Let us now examine briefly the arguments of the advocates: the Free Trader, the Imperialist, the breeder, the animal lover, and the Plain Man. The Free Trader would be more convincing if he could predict with certainty a fall in the price of meat to follow free importation. Unfortunately he cannot, and the enthusiasts who proclaimed a sixpence-a-pound decrease ("the 6*d*. lie," as the others call it) did more harm than good to the cause. A moderate estimate of the effect on prices is given by the Commission, and with that the Free Trader must be content. He may add that increased supplies always mean lower prices, and may go further, as experienced speakers have done, and say that to encourage herds in any part of the world makes markets for our stock, and further, that if we have in this country exceptional facilities for fattening, an export trade in beef can be created.

The Imperialist naturally wishes to trade with the Dominions and to gain their goodwill. He wants Canadian cattle to go East and West—reaching these shores—rather than North and South to the States. He finds himself, for once, out of harmony with the agricultural section of his usual Protectionist allies, who favour a preference to the Colonies mainly because it implies a tariff.

The breeder is in earnest about disease and deeply perturbed on the score of it. The evidence of health so far



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as Canadian cattle are concerned is overwhelming, but it leaves him cold. He alienates a few friends but attracts more, by pleading that his demand is in keeping with the spirit of the Key Industries Act. When he uses this argument he certainly shakes our faith in the value of his *ex cathedrâ* utterances on disease.

The animal-lover describes with truth the sufferings of live animals on the ocean. The tale is harrowing, but even he, the most disinterested of the contestants, has a weak joint in his armour. To-day store cattle suffer when they come from Ireland. Fat cattle suffer when they come from Canada. He has made no protest against these dealings, and now he would carry greater conviction if his action did not synchronise with the efforts of interested parties.

There remains the Plain Man, and he really decided the battle. A pledge he says was given. It was understood by the Canadians as such. It was referred to by our Prime Minister as such: " . . . The pledges given to Canada at the Imperial War Conference in 1917 were ' very definite pledges on behalf of the Cabinet.' " And therefore it must be redeemed.

The Free Trader accepts the help of the Plain Man less unreservedly than the preferentialist. The latter remembers other resolutions passed at the Imperial Conferences, including pledges to carry out a policy of inter-Empire preference. These are the foundations of his policy. The Free Trader, on the other hand, lays stress on the fact that the Government which gave this particular pledge is in power and bound by its own word. He would never acknowledge an equal validity for the other resolutions. But apart from these mental reservations or hidden aspirations, both recognise the great strength of the simple issue. It is a promise and must be redeemed.

In the autumn the breeders, with their champion Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, will attempt to effect a compromise. Store cattle will be admitted, but subject to a quarantine so strict as to paralyse the trade. The importers will declare that this is but to keep the promise to the ear and break it to the hope. If they prevail, the Government must lose the President of the Board of Agriculture, who has declared that to permit free importation would be a " betrayal of his trust."



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# Blessed are the Meek

## By Mary Webb

THE workhouse dozed in the Sunday afternoon hush. In the old women's room all was very quiet; only a single bee groped clumsily up and down the shut windows, seeking the free air, flowers, the sounding hives.

The gloomy July afternoon laid an atmosphere of disillusionment over everything. The sky was of the same sad grey as the workhouse stockings. Ninety-eight feet, clad in these stockings, were posed in various attitudes down the long room, swinging, tapping, crossed, or set out stilly side by side like those on tombs.

Forty-nine women, dressed in decent Sunday garments with white aprons, sat in rows on benches facing one another. Forty-nine souls, varied and strange and wistful, clamant for delight as the bee, were shut in here. All these life-stories, full of sad and joyous and wild happenings, had stopped here, and were only waiting for Death to break the final thread. Life was over. They were conscious of it, dumbly, uncomplainingly. They could not have been more completely sundered from their past lives if they had died and gone to Purgatory. But every heart, in this house that was not home, kept, clear and changeless, the picture of the home it had lost; of garden, shippen and fold; all the small, precious, sacramental things surrounding their busy lives—things they had hardly known to be precious until they were lost. For in those homes they had been individuals, centres of warmth and love. Here they were herded in a cold, almost derisive comfort; and through the long grey corridors the feet of the flame-clad, the laughter-bringer, the tear-giver—Love, were seldom heard.

They were knitting more grey stockings to wear when the others should be worn out. Their balls of wool, all exactly the same, lay beside them, and a blue-eyed kitten, passionately in love with itself, raced up and down the lines of passive feet and bullied the stout, unresisting balls.

"I'd lief be you!" said Fidelia Thatcher, who sat—tall, emaciated, white-capped—at the window end of a bench.



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" That's a wicked imagination, Delia! "

This came from a neighbour, a stout, rosy old woman.

" Cats 'anna got souls," she added.

Fidelia raised mild eyes, and her sweet, obstinate mouth took a firmer line as she said:

" Soul or no, I'd lief be that kit-cat."

Her face, tanned golden by decades of suns and snows, had the dignity of an ancient Egyptian bas-relief. And though her long upper lip, high forehead, and arched nose were intimidating, her eyes—dark and dovelike, brooding upon the furiously energetic kitten and the anxious bee—were beautiful as the eyes of a heifer. Her large hands, twisted and swollen at the knuckles from years of work, lay quietly in the white Union apron. She dreamed herself into the past. She was desperately afraid that in this place she might some day cease to believe in that past—in all the blossomy days that stretched away backwards from the day of her entrance here to her clover-scented childhood. To forget them would be like breaking faith with a lover.

One casement below and one above. What could a lone woman have wanted more? A pink rose-tree, a white rose-tree, and a lilac. These had presided over her garden. Her doves sunned themselves on the roof and paraded the tiles with soft pink feet. And, hearing the pattering enthusiasm of those pink feet above her attic morning by morning, and seeing the round cheeks of the roses pressed so confidingly against her window, she had almost forgotten that none would ever call her mother. Ah! Where was it now, that warm, scented peace? Where were those glad, laborious days when she scrubbed and rinsed the buttermits at the farm, returning in the evening with her perquisites of milk or pork or butter, with her small wage and her large content, and having her simple supper while dusk fell and the owls began to stir?

No conqueror of the world ever fought a harder, a grimmer battle than Fidelia's battle against Fate—against hunger and the grey defeat that was its alternative. She had " clemmed " and she had sweated. It was over now. She sat, a shade among shades, neither in Hell nor Heaven.

She rose and let out the bee. At the sudden cessation of its note the atmosphere grew more tense and heavy.



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" Theer ! " she said. " Out o' prison."

" Prison? What for, ' prison '? " asked a flat-faced, meek woman. " We gets our bellyful and a bed."

" What's meat? " cried Fidelia suddenly, out of her bitterness. " What's meat, with no heart to eat it? What's sleep with naught to wake for in the morning light? "

Down the benches ran a rustle and a sigh, like the wind in old, dry-leaved trees. There were murmurs.

" That's Gospel ! "

" That's the righteous truth ! "

" Delia's i' the right, no danger ! "

With faces turned towards her as to a prophetess, they took courage to remember the days gone by. Those days, those homes, those fields, those dear lost faces shone in their souls with the peculiar lustre that mingled love and tears give to the human memory, like the carven ivories that were painted long ago in silver and gold and rich, dim enamels, and studded with burning gems.

" I mind," said one, " ah ! I mind as if it was yesterday——"

At the magic of those words, " I mind," these pictures of the soul took shape and colour; from homely sentences and broken phrases, a sigh, a tear; so that to every eye in the room the dun-coloured walls were obliterated, glowing like painted windows, garlanded with memories, hung with the little eikons of forty-nine homes. Even the flat-faced materialist had possessed a home, and she was as jealous of its recollection as an ugly woman of a lover.

The balls of sad-coloured wool became inextricably tangled, as the exultant kitten seized her happy hour. Stockings were forgotten. Grey was forgotten. The matron was forgotten. Even the solemn festival that was to take place this very evening was forgotten.

" Cushat-doves ! " murmured Fidelia in a low and dreamy voice. " I kept cushat-doves. And my gyarden most always had a flower."

" Dahlias was what our maister was set on," said a very old woman with bright blue eyes. " Ah ! he liked a dahlia."

" Roses, ours fancied," put in the stout woman.

" Ah ! I clem for the smell of a cabbage rose," said Fidelia.



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She became mysterious, and dived into the deep pocket of her skirt.

" Look ye! " she whispered. "I couldna bide all summer without the smell of a cabbage rose. And this morning they'd left the ladder by our ward windy, being fluskered with the Bishop coming. So I crep' out and went to the matron's gyarden afore it was light and pulled this 'ere."

She held up a deep red rose amid cries of admiration and reproof.

And just as she held it up, the matron entered.

" That's the third time you've trespassed, broken bounds, and stolen," said the matron wearily. She was a kind-hearted woman, but her promotion depended on the strictness of her discipline. She was part of a machine. If it was a bad machine, she had neither time nor inclination to try to alter it.

" You'll stop away from service at the chapel to-night, and you won't go to the harvest tea at the Rectory," said the matron. Fidelia's Egyptian profile was unmoved; but tears stood in her eyes. Festivals were very few, and the harvest tea was the event of the year.

There was a sound of wheels. The Bishop! He entered with the Rector and some ladies. Everyone stood up. Only the kitten remained unimpressed.

The Bishop had thought, as he saw the workhouse from a turn of the road, that it looked dreary. He had thought that it would be good to turn the eyes of these old women to the mansions of the blest. He was really kind and sympathetic, only he was not gifted with imagination, and he had never been an old, homesick, knitting woman on a bench.

So he said cheerfully, " Suppose we sing

' Jerusalem, my happy home! '

and then, in lighter vein,

' Home, sweet home! ' "

He intended to weave these into his speech, and only to bring in mention of the consecration of the chapel towards the end.

They sang,

" Jerusalem, my happy home! "



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It was a little quavering, a little irregular, but that was put down to age.

Towards the end came an audible sob from Fidelia. Then they sang,

" Home, sweet home! "

What with the memories, and the talk, and Fidelia's sob, there were a good many sniffs and surreptitious wipings of eyes.

In the last line Fidelia flung her apron over her head and wept aloud.

" Thatcher! " said the matron.

" There, there! " soothed the Bishop; and he gave her shoulder a little pat, and told her to sit down, and was sure his speech would comfort her.

But, alas! his speech did not comfort. It lacerated. It destroyed the pictures that had glowed on the wall. It hammered to pieces the little eikons of home. It built up a picture of Heaven which had in it no touch of the loved fold and cottage, but which appeared to ninety-eight alarmed eyes to be exactly like the workhouse. It was grand and large and rather pompous. It had nothing in it of firelit evenings and the bit of sewing and father winding the clock. And the more the Bishop struggled to comfort a sorrow he could not grasp, the more formal he became.

When he had finished, Fidelia emerged from her apron, and her face was that of one who has been through an agony.

So that was Heaven!

No lilac. No pink rose, nor white rose. No work. No pink feet on the tiles. Nothing but an enormous, everlasting old women's ward built of solid gold, and without even a kitten.

She looked at the Bishop and beheld him as a thief, robbing her of all hope. She had thought, without exactly formulating her thought, that Heaven would be a place with homely corners in it where the poor might dwell as of old. This man was robbing her of her dream, and it was all she had. She stood up.

" It inna true! " she cried. " It's words, words, words, a mort of words; but it inna true. And if it's true I dunna



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want it. It's for Squire and Rector and you. It inna for us. We'm lost our whomes; we'm gone back to school, like, after working 'ard a many years. And if the Lord, as was but a carpenter's prentice 'isself, and the Lord's Mother, as was but a carpenter's wife, canna give poor folk a bit o' comfort in the next world, I dunna want to go there."

She sat down and retired into her apron. Every face on the lines of benches was strained forward towards the group that symbolised authority, waiting for doom to fall.

"Matron," said the Bishop, "the poor thing's overwrought."

"A little—queer. A little—wandering," added a lady.

"Do not punish her," said the Bishop. "The day must not be darkened."

"But she's hardly responsible, is she?" said a guardian.

The matron, trembling with distress and wrath, whispered to the Rector:

"The asylum side?"

"Yes, yes," said the Rector in what he meant to be a whisper, "the asylum side." But he was a hearty man, used to open-air sports, and his whisper was quite audible.

The visitors went away to tea at the Rectory. Service was not till seven. The old women filed out to their mugs of tea and slabs of bread and margarine. Fidelia remained where she was—a derelict. Discipline was momentarily relaxed because she did not count any more. The asylum side! The asylum side! She could not understand it. She, Fidelia Thatcher, the best butter-maker in the district, a self-respecting, self-supporting woman, had come to this. To-morrow she would be like a dumb beast driven hither and thither, under physical authority, bathed by attendants, slapped, taken for walks in a drove with imbeciles and lunatics—mad. No home on earth. No home in Heaven—if the Bishop was right.

"No!" she muttered. "It's lies, what he says." To-morrow, blackness of darkness; but she had to-night. She must think. She must efface herself to gain time.

The old women's room had a door opening into a paved,



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flowerless space which ought to have been a garden. Under the roof of the porch was a swallow's nest, hydra-headed with young. Fidelia loved to see the parent birds dart to and fro. She had watched them since they brought the first dabs of mud, until now when the young were ready to fly. She brought out a bench. No one ever came here in the evenings. They would go to the service and forget her. With folded hands she sat in her corner, so still that the birds were not afraid of her.

" Wings ! " she murmured. " Wings ! "

But there were no wings for her. Even if she desired to creep away and die by the roadside, she could not, for across the workhouse entrance was a locked gate. She watched the swallows flash across the slack clothes-line on which the grey stockings were dried, dart to the nest with that infinitesimal pause in which the food is miraculously transferred from beak to beak, and sweep away into the silent evening. And the swallows put into her mind what she would do. She fetched the yard broom, and raked down the nest.

" Fly ! " she said. " Ye can ! "

The four young swallows were gone into the soft, dove-coloured evening. From the chapel came the sound of the anthem.

" Blessed are the meek."

Fidelia, with the broom in her hand, looked at the broken house of clay.

" It inna true," she said to the depths of grey air. " They binna blessed. Them as is blessed is them as can fly."

With steady fingers she untied the clothes-line, and looped it over the beam of the porch. She drew forth her rose and smelt it. She saw again the pink rose-tree and the white rose-tree and the lilac. She climbed on to the bench.

" This minute," she said to herself, " I be a pauper lunatic by the mercy of men. The next minute I'll make a trial of the mercy of God. Fidelia Thatcher, fly ! Ye can ! "

And just as the concluding strains of " Blessed are the meek " sounded harmoniously, Fidelia Thatcher stepped off the bench.



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# "Literary Recreations" *

## By Sir George Greenwood

ANY lover of literature, and more especially of poetry, who has not already read the two delightful volumes whose title stands at the head of this paper, may be envied the pleasure that lies before him. It is difficult to say which of the two has the greater charm, but on the whole I think most readers will be inclined to give the palm to the second on account of those three absorbing chapters on "The Classics in Daily Life," "The Art of Editing," and "The Charm of the Greek Anthology"; and it is with these before me that I would crave leave to write some words of appreciation, and at the same time, while scrupulously avoiding any attempt to "gild refined gold," to add some comments, reflections, and quotations suggested by the context.

Let us first, then, turn to the chapter on "The Art of Editing," where, at p. 165, Sir Edward quotes the lines of Milton's invocation of the Spirit of Mirth:—

> And in thy right hand lead with thee
> The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
> And, if I give thee honour due,
> Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
> To live with her, and live with thee,
> In unreproved pleasures free;
> To hear the lark begin his flight,
> And, singing, startle the dull night
> From his watch-tower in the skies
> Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
> Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
> And at my window bid good-morrow,
> Through the sweet-briar or the vine
> Or the twisted eglantine.

Here, writes Sir Edward, "A reader who trips it as he goes may not detect any difficulty in this passage; but in the fourth line from the end, who is 'to come' to say good-morning 'at my window'—the lark, or somebody else?" And he then quotes Professor Masson: "It is

* *Literary Recreations* and *More Literary Recreations*. By ~~the late~~ Sir Edward Cook, K.B.E. (Macmillan, 1918 and 1919.)



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not the lark at all that Milton makes come to the window and bid good-morrow, and by no possibility could that absurdity fit with the syntax of the passage. By the syntax, as well as by the sense, it is L'Allegro, the cheerful youth (Milton himself, we may suppose), that comes to the window and salutes people. The words, *Then to come*, in line 45, refer to, and depend upon, the previous words, *Mirth, admit me*, of line 38. Milton, or whoever the imaginary speaker is, asks Mirth to admit him to her company and that of the nymph Liberty, and to let him enjoy the pleasures natural to such companionship. He then goes on to specify such pleasures, or give examples of them. The first is that of the sensations of early morning, when, walking round a country cottage, one hears the song of the mounting skylark, welcoming the signs of sunrise. The second is that of coming to the cottage window, looking in, and bidding a cheerful good-morrow through the sweet-briar, vine, or eglantine, to those of the family who are also early astir."

Now this passage at once attracted my attention, because, by a rather curious coincidence, I had myself quoted these same fourteen lines of *L'Allegro*, and this same criticism of Professor Masson's, and had made much the same remarks upon them as I find made by Sir Edward Cook, some twenty years before the publication of his book, viz., in an article headed *Poetry and Pipes*, which appeared in the, alas, now defunct *Temple Bar* of September, 1899. Here I wrote of Masson's criticism (putting the words into the mouth of an imaginary Professor): " I think it is, like many modern criticisms, over-confident in tone, dealing as it does with the passage as though there were no real difficulty in it at all. No doubt the words seem to refer to the action of the poet, as you say,* and as Masson says; but surely it is very difficult to suppose that Milton pictured himself as coming to his own window to say good morning to ' those of the family who were also early astir '! There seems something not a little ridiculous in the supposition. I have always regarded the subject of the passage—call him the poet, or call him the cheerful man—as being awakened by the skylark—ἐγειρομένῳ κορυδαλλῷ—and then it ought to be the nymph herself—' Mirth,' whom Milton has just

* The article was written in the form of a conversation.



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invoked—who comes to his window to bid him a cheery good-morrow,

> While the cock, with lively din,
> Scatters the rear of Darkness thin.

And I can't help believing that this was the idea in Milton's mind, though unfortunately we cannot read this new subject into the sentence without doing great violence to the construction."

I venture to think that my imaginary " Professor " was in the right here. As Sir Edward Cook writes, " Masson does not explain how Milton, already out, is to come to ' my window,' " and really, the idea of the poet coming to his own window to say " good morning " to early-rising members of his family seems to me rather too absurd to be entertained.

Mark Pattison believed that the skylark was the subject of the verb *to come*, and deduces from this and other passages in Milton's works that the poet was not " a close observer of things around him," for, as he justly but rather unnecessarily remarks, " The skylark never approaches human habitations in this way as the redbreast does ! "

It is true that we find some of our earlier poets speaking of the lark as bidding good-morrow to the dawn. Thus Drayton, in the *Shepheards' Garland*, writes :

> The whistling larke, ymounted on her wings,
> To the gray morrow her good-morrow sings.

And, more appropriate still, Sir William Davenant writes :

> The lark now leaves his watery nest,
> And climbing shakes his dewy wings.
> He takes your window for the East,
> And to implore your light he sings.

Here we have the lark imagined as if not actually *coming* to the window, at least approaching, and gazing at it.

These verses, however,* are certainly not sufficient to establish the famous Rector's contention that Milton referred to the lark as coming to his window. But if neither the lark nor Milton himself is intended, who *is* intended? I think we must shut our eyes to the strict syntax of the passage and read into it the Spirit of Mirth. It was,

* It will be understood that they are not quoted by Sir Edward Cook, who agrees with Masson in rejecting the idea of the lark as the morning visitant.



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surely, the Spirit of Mirth, or, at any rate, L'Allegro, the cheerful man, whom Milton imagined as coming to his window to bid him good-morrow, and we must, I trow, be content to leave it there, and let the syntax look after itself.

All this about the skylark naturally brings to our minds Shelley's glorious Ode, and that again leads us to consider some of Sir Edward Cook's remarks on "Assimilative Poets" in his chapter on "The Art of Editing." Tennyson, he tells us, found, as do many others, a peculiar charm in those passages of great masters of poesy "where they adopt the creation of a bygone poet, and re-clothe it, more or less, according to their fancy." Now, if one were to be asked to quote the two finest lines in Shelley's *Ode to the Skylark*, I think it probable that, in nine cases out of ten, he would select those which make such melancholy reflection upon poor humanity:

> We look before and after
> And pine for what is not.

Yet here Shelley had but "assimilated," or "re-clothed," a thought well known to every reader of *Hamlet*:

> Sure He that made us with such large discourse,
> *Looking before* and *after*, gave us not
> That capability, and god-like reason
> To rust in us unused.*

Again, what a fine phrase is that of Shelley's "the gorgeous East"!

> Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,

wrote Shelley, and we feel that the epithet corresponds with the eternal fitness of things—that there is no alternative for it. Yet here again he had "assimilated" the expression from the Great Master. For what wrote Shakespeare in *Love's Labour's Lost*?

> At the first opening of the gorgeous East!

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* Shelley's "pine for what is not" brings to mind a line from Petronius quoted in Montaigne's essay, "Upon some Verses of Virgil" (Bk. 3, ch. 5, in Florio's translation): *animus quod perdidit optat*. I have somewhere seen the two lines quoted from Shelley's Ode done into Latin as follows:

> Prospicit aeternos, anteactos respicit annos
> Anxia gens hominum. Quod non est aegrius optat,

but it must be confessed that the last words of the pentameter are hardly satisfying.



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And how many lovers of Tennyson will quote to you from *In Memoriam*, as examples of tender and pathetic thought, those well-known lines,

> And from his ashes shall be made
> The violets of his native land,

in blissful ignorance of the fact that the idea is of purest coin from the Shakespearean mint:

> Lay her i' the earth;
> And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> May violets spring.

But, after all, a Latin poet had said the same thing long before Shakespeare. For what says Persius:

> Nunc non e manibus illis,
> Nunc non e tumulo, fortunatâque favillâ,
> Nascentur violae?

As for Tennyson, Sir Edward quotes four lines from *The Princess*, which so very closely resemble four lines in Shelley's *Prometheus*, that if it be true that the later poet—as he protested—did not consciously borrow from the earlier one, all one can say is that the lines of Tennyson must have been suggested by his "subliminal consciousness." *

We may take another example from Beattie's *Minstrel*. That poem is not, I think, much read now, but the two concluding lines of the opening stanza are still fairly well known:

> In life's low vale remote has pin'd alone,
> Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown.

How many who read these lines are aware that the expression "In life's low vale" is lifted bodily from Pope's *Essay on Man*?

But for a very interesting, and till very recently quite unsuspected, case where a modern singer has "adopted the creation of a bygone poet, and re-clothed it, more or less, according to his own fancy," † I would refer to Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*:

> My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
> My sense as though of hemlock I had drunk,
> Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
> One minute past, and Lethewards had sunk.

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* *More Literary Recreations* (1919), pp. 179–80.

† Tennyson's words, *mutatis mutandis*, as quoted by Sir E. Cook, *More Literary Recreations*, p. 179.



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Now set beside these lines the following from Horace's 14th Epode:

> Mollis inertia cur tantam diffuderit imis
> Oblivionem sensibus,
> Pocula Lethaeos ut si ducentia somnos
> Arente fauce traxerim.

Can it be doubted that the English lines were inspired by those of Quintus Horatius Flaccus? * Yet will anybody be so foolish as to suggest that Keats's incomparable Ode is in the very slightest degree marred by the fact that when writing the opening passage he had the Latin original in his mind? Nor is it surprising that he should thus have "assimilated" the words of the old Roman poet, for Keats, although we are told he had "no Greek," certainly received a good education in Latin at John Clarke's school at Enfield, where, it is said, he won all the prizes for literature, and devoured all the classical mythology he could lay hands on. He was far indeed from being the uneducated apothecary's assistant that some uninformed critics have pictured him.

Reference has already been made to Shelley's *Prometheus*, and it may not be out of place here to mention a suggested amendment of the last line of the chained Titan's magnificent speech with which this grand poem opens. He appeals to the Mountains, the "icy springs stagnant with wrinkling frost," the air, and the whirlwinds —all the elemental powers which had heard the curse aforetime imprecated by him upon the "Mighty God," the "cruel King," who had nailed him to that "wall of eagle baffling mountain"—the curse which he would now recall—and according to all the published editions of this great drama he thus concludes his solemn and sublime invocation:

> If then my words had power,
> Though I am changed, so that aught evil wish
> Is dead within; although no memory be
> Of what is hate, let them not lose it now.
> What was that curse? for ye all heard me speak.

Are not the last six words a rather tame conclusion for this magnificent outburst? And is it not possible that Shelley wrote the line thus:

> What was that curse? For ye all heard me. *Speak!*

* So far as I am aware, the first to discover this was my brother, the late Charles William Greenwood, Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, and eighth classic in the Tripos of 1870, who pointed it out to me.



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Obedient to this appeal the spirit voices—the voices of the mountains, the springs, the air, and the whirlwinds—make answer.

Emendations are dangerous things, and generally to be deprecated, but there is one at any rate which has, I think, met with universal acceptance. I refer to the alteration made in the sextet of Blanco White's famous sonnet on " Night and Death." The lines as originally published stand thus:

> Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
> Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
> Whilst *fly* and leaf and insect stood revealed,
> That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
> Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
> If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

Here even " a reader who trips it as he goes " must detect either a *lapsus calami*, or a printer's error, or a grievous fault. For is not a " fly " an " insect "? Evidently the line calls for alteration, and to substitute " flower " for " fly " seems an obvious emendation. Sir Edward Cook says it was made by Mr. William Sharp, but, surely, it must have occurred to many a thoughtful reader, though he had never heard of Mr. William Sharp's *Sonnets of the Century*!

Coleridge, as we know, and as Sir E. Cook quotes, expressed the opinion that this sonnet of Blanco White's was " the finest and most grandly conceived sonnet in our language," though he added the large qualification, " at least it is only in Milton and in Wordsworth that I remember any rival." It is well that he should have made such a reservation, for there are many who will prefer that glorious sonnet of Wordsworth's—to give but one example—which begins with the words " The world is too much with us," and ends with that grand line, " Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn," which Mr. Gladstone thought one of the finest lines in all poetry,* and there are not a few critics who hold that the Petrarchan form of sonnet (such as that used by Wordsworth in the example referred to) is far superior to that which ends with a rhyming couplet, even in spite of the fact that the latter form is employed by Shakespeare.

And there is yet another objection to Blanco White's

* *Literary Recreations*, p. 184.



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sonnet, as it seems to me, magnificent as it most undeniably is. Surely, if a sonnet is to conclude with a rhyming couplet that couplet should, as it were, crystallise the pervading thought of the poem, and not leave it in a fluid state; or, to change the metaphor, should not the final couplet fall like a hammer-stroke, with a note of decision and concentration? But Blanco White's sonnet ends with a question:

> If Life can thus deceive, wherefore not Light?

Is not this ending in weakness rather than in strength? The question does not concentrate our thought, but sends it off in meandering mazes of speculation.

This, however, is but the criticism of one who has no claim to speak with authority, and some, doubtless, will dissent from it. In any view the sonnet must be admitted to be one of the grandest in our language, and it is by this "single work of genius produced by a voluminous writer" that Blanco White will live, when, as Leslie Stephen has written, "his other works have been forgotten."

Let us now turn to Sir Edward Cook's delightful chapter on "The Charm of the Greek Anthology." Here, turning over the pages at random, we find the following:— "In one of the beautiful stanzas which the fastidious taste of Gray caused him to discard on a final revision of the *Elegy*, there is a reminiscence of a piece in the Anthology:

> There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
> By hands unseen, are showers of violets found;
> The red-breast loves to build, and warble there,
> And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

Rhianus in his epitaph on Timon had written of a grave so covered by thorn or bramble 'that not even a bird in spring may rest its light foot on me.'" And a note tells us, "I take this parallel passage from Platt's *Last Ramble in the Classics*, p. 128."

But here, for once, I find it somewhat difficult to follow the guide who leads us with, as a rule, such unerring instinct through such pleasant paths. Surely the reason why the poet discarded this beautiful stanza was, not only because he thought—as some of the commentators tell us—that the parenthesis would be too long if it were retained, but for the better reason that the description of the grave there given is not appropriate to the lot implied by the



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epitaph. Those violets, and those little footsteps are rather suggestive of the honoured grave of one who had left children, or grandchildren, behind him, than of the youth of whom it is said that "Melancholy marked him for her own." Nor can I think that the words cited from Rhianus are a "parallel passage." Gray's stanza, surely, does not suggest to us a grave "covered by thorn or bramble," so that not even a bird may rest its light foot on it, but rather the well-tended last resting-place of one in whose memory mourners come to scatter violets, "the earliest of the year," where children's footsteps lightly print the ground around it, and where the redbreast loves to warble, and, as we may well imagine, at times rests its "light foot" also on the grave where the violets lie. And it was such considerations, as I venture to think, that decided Gray to discard the stanza in question.*

There is another beautiful stanza, not mentioned by Sir Edward, which "the fastidious taste of Gray caused him to discard in a final revision of the *Elegy*":

> Him have we seen, the greenwood side along,
> While o'er the heath we hied, our labour done,
> Oft as the woodlark pip'd her farewell song,
> With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun.

Of this stanza Masson remarks that he rather wonders that the poet should have rejected it, yet, here again, there is,

* See *More Literary Recreations*, p. 307, and note. The reference for Rhianus's epitaph on Timon is to the *Greek Anthology*, vii., 315. Since this was in type Mr. Edmund Gosse has suggested that Gray may have rejected the stanza in question "because he found, late in 1749, that [William] Collins had already written:

> The red-breast oft at evening hours
> Shall kindly lend his little aid:
> With hoary moss, and gathered flowers,
> To deck the ground where thou art laid.

"The coincidence," writes Mr. Gosse, "is certainly remarkable, as the young poets were in no mutual communication. Gray, who was extremely sensitive to censure, may have felt that he might be accused of stealing from Collins, and may for this reason have sacrificed his stanza, which he tentatively published in the third edition of the *Elegy*, and then finally suppressed" (*Sunday Times*, December 25th, 1921). But I still venture to think that my suggested explanation (which I published many years ago in *Temple Bar*) is probably the true one. After all, there is very considerable difference between the quoted stanzas of Gray and Collins. It is true that we have a grave and the red-breast and flowers in each, but Collins says nothing of those "show'rs of violets," the earliest of the year, or the "little footsteps" that "lightly print the ground," nor does Gray make the very artificial suggestion that the robin helped to deck the grave with "moss and gathered flowers."



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I think, one obvious reason. The following stanza begins, " Hard by yon wood," and thus we should have had *green-wood*, *woodlark*, and *wood* all together, which Gray's sensitive ear and taste could never have tolerated.

It is curious that the second line of this famous *Elegy* should so often be misquoted. In most editions it is given thus:

The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea.

Even Palgrave so writes it in *The Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics*. But some editors, noticing, no doubt, how the concurrence of two sibilants—wind*s* *s*lowly—jars upon the ear, have substituted:

The lowing *herds* wind slowly o'er the lea,

an emendation suggestive of a cattle-ranch, as though, forsooth, the poet in the old churchyard at Stoke were contemplating a number of herds winding, all at once, slowly o'er the lea!

But the fact is that Gray wrote neither " herds " nor " winds." His " fastidious taste " would certainly not have tolerated the collision of the two sibilants, and the " cattle-ranch " emendation is clearly out of the question. The line as written by the poet is:

The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea.

" Herd " is a " noun of multitude," or " collective noun," to use the language of the grammarians, and is quite properly followed by a plural verb, just as a Latin author might write (*e.g.*) *turba ruunt*, as our Latin grammars taught us when we were schoolboys. There has recently been some controversy as to this, but that Gray so wrote is proved by the fact that the line so stands in his hand-writing in the Pembroke MS.*

The charm of the Greek Anthology pervades the whole of the appreciative chapter which Sir Edward Cook has

* In September, 1921, Mr. Gerald Harper wrote in the *Westminster Gazette:* " The works of Thomas Gray by William Mason, 1814, contain a copy of the *Elegy* in facsimile of the handwriting of the poet, taken from the Pembroke MS. In this copy the line in question is, ' The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea.' " See also my letter in the same journal of September 21st, 1921. It may be noted that a Latin writer still more fastidious than Gray, Cicero to wit, never makes use of this construction of a collective noun with a plural predicate, but as Livy, Sallust, Cæsar, and the poets did so, such user is, of course, quite "classical."



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published under that title, but the exigencies of space forbid that I should select more than two further examples.

"How did Shakespeare," asks Sir Edward, "who had 'small Latin and less Greek,' come to know the Greek Anthology? . . . At any rate, there is one epigram (ix. 627) which he himself almost translated. It is by a Byzantine lawyer, Marianus, who amused himself by turning Theocritus into iambics as well as by turning occasional verses of his own. The piece in question was an inscription for a hot spring known as 'The Fountain of Love.'" Shakespeare's last two Sonnets are alternative versions of this epigram—adaptations rather than translations. Sir Edward quotes the second of them only, but I will transcribe them both. They run as follows:—

SONNET 153.

Cupid laid by his Brand and fell asleep;
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground,
Which borrow'd from this holy fire of Love
A dateless lively heat, still to endure,
And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure.
But at my mistress' eye Love's Brand new fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast;
I, sick withal, the help of both desired,
And thither hied, a sad distempered guest,
But found no cure; the bath for my help lies
Where Cupid got new fire, my mistress' eyes.

SONNET 154.

The little Love-God, lying once asleep,
Laid by his side his heart-inflaming brand,
Whilst many nymphs that vowed chaste life to keep
Came tripping by: but in her maiden hand
The fairest votary took up that fire
Which many legions of true hearts had warmed;
And so the General of hot desire
Was sleeping by a virgin hand disarmed.
This brand they quenchéd in a cool well by,
Which from Love's fire took heat perpetual,
Growing a bath and healthful remedy
For men diseased; but I, my mistress' thrall,
Came there for cure, and this by that I prove,
Love's fire heats water, water cools not love.

Now, as the late Walter Begley observes, "it is not a little remarkable to find Shakespeare figuring in company with Grotius, Thomas Gray, Pagnini, Herder, and Bacon,



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for a version of a Greek epigram; but he so appears in Dr. Wellesley's *Anthologia Polyglotta*, published in 1849."*

But what is the meaning of these sonnets, and who is the "mistress" addressed by the poet in such glowing terms? Who is "the fairest votary," "a maid of Dian's"? Are not these terms mightily suggestive of "the Imperial votaress" of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, against whom "Cupid's fiery shaft" was launched in vain, being "quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon"? And do we not remember the portrait of Elizabeth as Diana with the crescent moon on her brow? And what is the "seething bath" which "men prove against strange maladies a sovereign cure," "the healthful remedy for men diseased"? The poet tells us he "the help of both desired, and thither hied," or, as he puts it in the second sonnet, "came there for cure." And whither was it that he "went for cure," and found this "seething bath"? I can hardly doubt that the allusion is to the City of Bath, which we know from Nichol's *Progresses* was visited by Queen Elizabeth in 1592, 1602, and on other occasions. Shakespeare it seems was paying compliments to his "mistress," the Virgin Queen, quite in the style of the period, through the medium of a Greek epigram.†

But it must be confessed that the two examples I have selected of reminiscences of Greek epigrams to be found in the works of English poets, interesting though they are, give the reader no sort of an idea of the real "charm of the Greek Anthology." The next example, however, is of a different character, and brings that charm before our minds perhaps as well as any single example can. I allude to that beautiful epigram ascribed to Plato—and "no doubt correctly," writes Sir E. Cook—which is one of two addressed to Aster:

> Ἀστέρας εἰσαθρεῖς Ἀστὴρ ἐμός· εἴθε γενοίμην
> οὐρανός, ὡς πολλοῖς ὄμμασιν εἰς σὲ βλέπω.

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* *Is it Shakespeare?* By a Graduate of Cambridge (John Murray, 1903), p. 71. The epigram is to be found also in T. W. Mackail's *Select Epigrams from the Greek Mythology*.

† I put forward this interpretation of the Sonnets in question upwards of thirteen years ago in *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* (John Lane, 1908), p. 127. But it was, I think, Steevens who first suggested that the allusion was to the city of Bath.



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Sir Edward gives several translations of this lovely epigram, of which the best is, I think, that of Dean Farrar:

> Gazing at stars, my Star? I would that I were the welkin,
> Starry with infinite eyes, gazing for ever at thee.

This is, however, as he justly says, though "beautiful," rather "too florid," and somehow that old English word "the welkin" strikes one as inappropriate here, where the last thing we want is anything suggestive of any striving after effect.

But Sir Edward does not quote the translation which appears to me by far the best of those hitherto attempted, and which I think he could not have known:

> Gazing at stars, my Star? Would I might be
> Heaven with its myriad eyes to gaze on thee.

This closely follows the sweet simplicity of the original Greek, and I think it would be difficult to improve upon it.*

I have not space to quote that which Sir Edward Cook calls "the most beautiful version from an actual epigram in the Anthology"—I allude to the epigram of Callimachus on Heraclitus as translated by William Cory (better known to *old* Etonians—alas, I must lay stress on the epithet—as "Billy Johnson"), the author of *Ionica*, but there is no need to do so, for it is known, as Sir Edward says, to "every lover of poetry." Space also forbids me to quote, as I should like to do, the translation by another old Eton master, Herbert Snow (afterwards Kynaston), of Meleager's pathetic dirge on "Heliodore," † or those two lines of Plato's on Aster, which Mr. Mackail says are "perhaps the most perfect epigram ever written in any language," and which Shelley has rendered:

> Thou wert the Morning Star among the living
> Ere thy fair light was fled;
> Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
> New splendour to the dead.§

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* There is, however, another version which reads, "Heaven with unnumber'd eyes," which may be preferred by some as being closer to the πολλοῖς ὄμμασιν. Literally, of course, the meaning is "with many eyes"; but although this perfectly satisfies us in the Greek, in English we seem to require something stronger, such as "myriad" or "unnumbered" eyes. I do not know who was the author of this beautiful translation.

† See *More Literary Recreations*, p. 372, and *Anthologia Graeca*, by the Rev. F. St. John Thackeray, pp. 341 and 429.

§ *More Literary Recreations*, p. 354. The epigram is quoted also in Mr. Thackeray's *Anthologia Graeca* at p. 279.



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Here, therefore, I must take leave of the fascinating subject of the Greek Anthology, and Sir Edward Cook's appreciative chapter thereon, in which every lover of poetry and of the classics will find abundant "literary recreation."

Sir Edward has asked: "What is perfection in poetry? What is the test of 'the very utmost beauty possible to human words'?" He tells us that "Professor Quiller-Couch counts as one element in it the power of exciting what he calls 'the Great Thrill—the sudden shiver, the awed surprise of the magic of poetry,'" and he continues, with reference to Keats's Odes, "For my part I am more thrilled by the second and third stanzas of the 'Grecian Urn' than by anything in the 'Autumn.' In this quality the 'Grecian Urn' seems to me second only to the 'Nightingale.' It may, I think, safely be said that a vote of the best judges would place the 'Nightingale' at the head of the list." *

It is always pleasant to be able to conclude upon a note of satisfaction and agreement, and here I find myself in entire harmony with the excellent and appreciative critic who wrote these words. In conclusion, therefore, and in this connection, perhaps I may be allowed to make one more reference to some words that I myself wrote nearly a quarter of a century ago.† It was not Professor Quiller-Couch, but an imaginary Professor, brought upon the scene for the purpose of a literary *causerie*, who, when confronted with the question: "If you are asked to name a short passage of poetry, say three or four lines, to which you would give the palm for what I may call *magical effect*, which would you select?" answers that for "weirdness" there is no poet like Coleridge, and instances the lines in "Kubla Khan":

> Where Alph the sacred river ran
> Through caverns measureless to man
> Down to a sunless sea,

and that other line which seems so much to have impressed Miss Marie Corelli:

> Woman wailing for her demon lover.

He then cites "that quite terribly impressive couplet of

* *Literary Recreations*, pp. 191–2.
† See *Temple Bar*, January, 1898.



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the unknown northern poet, which once heard can never be effaced from memory " :

> 'Twas late in the night, and the bairns grat.
> The mother beneath the mould heard that.

And " for beauty," says he, " not indeed weird, but equally magical in its effect, nothing can surpass Wordsworth's exquisite thought :

> The light that never was on sea or land."

And what " can be more tenderly beautiful," he asks, than those lovely lines :

> She shall lean her ear
> In many a secret place,
> Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
> *And beauty born of murmuring sound*
> *Shall pass into her face.*

But these, he comments, are perhaps not quite what was intended by " lines of magical effect," and he concludes with these words : " For that I think I would give the palm to Keats, when he hears in the nightingale's voice :

> The same that oft-times hath
> Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn.

What marvellous, mysterious lines ! They make the very skin tingle all over one ! " Here, then, is " the Great Thrill—the sudden shiver, the awed surprise of magic poetry."

But it is time for me to end, as did the Professor, with one of his favourite quotations : *Claudite iam rivos pueri, sat prata biberunt.**

* Wordsworth's line, "The light that never was on sea or land," and that which follows it, in the stanzas "suggested by a picture of Peele Castle in a storm," might well have been dealt with by Sir Edward Cook in his interesting chapter on "The Second Thoughts of Poets" (*Literary Recreations*, ch. ix.), for in an edition of Wordsworth published by W. Kent and Co. in 1880 they appear as follows :

> The lustre known to neither sea nor land,
> The consecration and the Poet's dream.

Compare these with those glorious other lines, some of the very best in all our poetry, and now universally accepted :

> The light that never was on sea or land ;
> The consecration and the Poet's dream.

When was the alteration made? Surely the lines first quoted could not have been the poet's "Second Thoughts"!



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THEATRE-CRAFT
Editors: Hermon Ould and Horace Shipp

# The Contemporary Theatre

By Hermon Ould

## *Sybil Thorndike's Season.*

It is a matter of no little importance to the English theatre that Miss Sybil Thorndike is in management at the New Theatre. We have many efficient and brilliant actresses, but none of them, with the exception of Miss Thorndike, appear to have that largeness of social outlook for which the theatre craves. To Miss Thorndike the theatre is not only an amusement and not only Shakespeare; it is not merely a commercial investment and not merely a field for the exploitation of her own personality. It is, one divines by instinct and deduces by a consideration of her career, a medium for the revelation and intensification of life. A grounding in realistic plays of the "repertory" order in Manchester, a spell of Shakespeare at the Old Vic, a short but memorable experiment in Greek Tragedy, a lapse into Grand Guignolism—these phases of a career still in the making argue a breadth of understanding and sympathy which arouses great hopes for the season which has recently started at the New Theatre. There has probably been no finer piece of acting in London than Sybil Thorndike's Hecuba: one was held by it from the moment when the divided curtains discovered Troy's stricken queen crouching in cosmic misery, and the opening words, "Up from the earth, O weary head! . . . Thou breaking neck, be strengthenèd!" struck the note which was sustained until the end: "Wrath in the earth and quaking and a flood that sweepeth all." If, as is hinted, Miss Thorndike revives *The Trojan Women* during her present season, no lover of fine acting should miss it.

Of St. John Ervine's play, *Jane Clegg*, with which Miss



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*Photograph by Florence Vandamm.*

Sybil Thorndike as Hecuba in
The Trojan Women.



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Thorndike has opened her season, there is little, at this time of day, to be said. It is a clever, straightforward piece of work. The characters are well drawn and clearly defined; they are types which most of us have met and have no wish to meet again. It seems a pity that the author was unable to find one at least potentially fine type to mitigate the depressing meanness of the plot and its exponents. Even Jane Clegg, the best of a sorry bundle, in whom there are glimmerings of idealism, is only negatively sympathetic. Where did Mr. Ervine study his types? They speak no dialect in particular. If he had gone to his native Ireland he would have been able to sublimate as sordid a story by the use of a more picturesque language. Even full-blooded Cockney would have been more invigorating than the colourless, imageless conversation of these Cleggs and their associates, who seem to live in an utterly devitalised atmosphere, which overflows into the auditorium.

The acting of the play is almost flawless. Miss Thorndike's Jane is a quiet, restrained, rounded piece of work, which succeeds by sheer fidelity to the author's conception. She does not try to make more of the part than he did. There are no fine moments, no "scenes," nothing which quickens the pulse: it is all admirably true to the uninspiring piece of life which the author for some reason wished to show us. Equally true to life is Miss Clare Greet's study of Mrs. Clegg, an exasperatingly loquacious old woman whose flabby self-indulgence (her indulgence of her son is only another form of self-indulgence) is the real cause of all the trouble. Without swerving from the realistic method, Miss Greet contrives to secure all the laughs which the author intended, and many others. The male characters do not offer so much scope. All the parts are capably filled, and it would not be easy to find a more convincing Henry than Mr. Leslie Faber's. Mr. Lewis Casson, who is the producer, gave distinction to a small part and achieved the subtlest make-up I have seen for some time. The humour of the play is, I believe, characteristically Irish: one never laughs with the characters, but always at them. They are butts. No new link of sympathy is forged between us and them; on the contrary, one is made to feel one's superiority to them.



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### *Author versus Artist.*

Often, when I have praised a modernist production of Shakespeare, I have been asked: "But would Shakespeare like it?" and I have replied: "He would have to put up with it. A play seen through the eyes of anybody but the author must, inevitably, differ from the original conception. To quarrel with this is to quarrel with the theatre as a medium. And one does not quarrel with a medium of expression: either one finds it attractive or one leaves it alone."

Therefore, when Mr. Paul Nash told me that he was making a design for the fourth act of my play, *The Black Virgin*, I did not imagine that his visualisation of the scene would tally with mine; but I admit that I was not prepared for the curious interpretation of my intentions which the design published in the last number of THE ENGLISH REVIEW revealed. So many people have asked me if I like it, that I have thought it worth while to gather together the following fragments of letters which passed between Mr. Nash and myself:—

"I have to confess," I wrote, "that *The Black Virgin* design has disappointed me. I did so want to like it! As a design, yes; I find it extremely interesting; but it just isn't my vision. The setting should suggest mystery, romance, soft contours, undefined shadows, and Southern warmth; and I fear that your fidelity to angular shapes, with their necessarily hard shadows, has produced almost the opposite effect."

To which, Mr. Nash: "How very tragic! I am almost as disappointed as you are. I did so want you to like it! But then, you know, you have a very odd idea about your play! How can you expect these frank, unsentimental, Ibsenish creatures, voicing hard iconoclastic ideas, to produce an effect of warmth and soft contours? The whole play is dynamic—often brutal. How can one get a Conderesque atmosphere into a play where young women grab young men and say, 'Give me a child!' The only soft figure in the lot is the charming boy. I took it your idea was to give an idea of *freedom from* undefined shadows—a reaching towards clear definition rather, tingling life. I cannot agree, of course, that my design lacks either romance or mystery, but then I believe that the greatest



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mystery is got by the greatest definition, and romance, for me, never depends upon undefined shadows. Honestly, I have really tried to realise the soul of your play, and I still believe I have. I am not so much surprised that you do not like my setting for your play as I am at your own interpretation of your play. Remember, the setting is for the *last* scene—the heights above the town, a place of pure air, mysterious, but austere—the escape to new life. So I see it."

To which, this feeble rejoinder: "Your extraordinary understanding of the intellectual purport of *The Black Virgin* is disarming. If you understand that so well, perhaps you are right about its expression in graphic form. I still can't help thinking that you have missed the romantic aspect of the story. That scene in the cliff-top wood is certainly one where lies and conventions are shed and baseness meets its end and weakness its own reward; but it is also a scene in which romantic youth goes on with its twanging lutes and guitars and love-songs . . . and illusions."

Judge between us!



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# The Theatre Pays

## By The Hon. Maynard Greville

THERE has been and still is much wailing and gnashing of teeth in theatrical circles, and the cry of a multitude of producers, managers, and proprietors has gone up to Heaven, or rather down to Hell, the contemporary seat of the Deity. The first thing to do when you have made a fool of yourself is to blame the Government; both stage and screen are therefore inveighing against the entertainments tax. Good; let us abolish it and let these mass producers of art complete their work and ruin the stage thoroughly. It would be a scandal to drive them back to a shady life in the city, or to ask them to resume the childish wrangling which passes for higher finance. Have they not told us that they are giving the public what it wants—an estimable thing, not encouraged in other forms of business. But then we may well ask, " Does the public know what it wants? " " No," they answer; " but we can show them." I seem to have heard that cry before, in the dim past when I was a small child. Then, with admirable sagacity, I kicked something breakable and made a scene. It would seem that a similar treatment is suiting the theatre. It is an estimable thing to know what others want, but first see that your tea-service is screwed to the table or it may prove expensive in crockery.

" They will not go to the highbrow stuff," shouts the producer. Highbrow? What is highbrow? The word itself has an unpleasant flavour, as it necessitates a measure of inferiority in the person who uses it. Revenge is very sweet, and if you are too stupid to understand the obvious, you can call it highbrow, which may elevate you in your own opinion if in no one else's. If, however, you mean purely intellectual, the hard dry bones of logic picked from some pale-blooded half-dead prig, who feels and lives and yet denies it, then you are right. For this is dilettantism, a necessary safety valve, since we are imperfect,



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but when usurping work the most revolting vice that can afflict us. If the thing is alive, it matters not what it is. All great work is invariably understandable when it is not over-intellectualised. It is a remarkable tribute to the essential vitality of the great in art, that the classics manage to survive after all the rot that has been written and talked about them. How any man who has been to school can be expected to face Shakespeare in after life without a feeling of nausea remains to me inexplicable. That he actually does so, in many cases, is a tribute to the miraculous genius of Shakespeare and not to anyone else. Man will always understand a great thing when he sees it, even when he tries to deceive himself by scrutinising his understanding and becoming introspective. Highbrowism is only involved with that modern illusion (the result of education) that it is necessary to understand a work of art consciously in order to appreciate it.

To return to our producers and the grinding of property molars. During the last twenty years there has been a great invasion of the world of art by people whose genius was better adapted to other vocations. The commercial mind took a long time to realise the money-making possibilities of a field which had formerly been purely creative. These supermen of big business saw artists chiefly as mental degenerates, and they exploited this degeneracy in the belief that it was what people wanted. They failed to realise that the artist was only a mental degenerate in so far as his art failed him, like any other common or garden human being. Beethoven was the less, not the greater, for being a tiresome old man. It is this organised orgy of inferiority that is gradually flecking the lips of the public with foam.

The cinematograph has a great future before it, but it is at present suffering from a short but murky tradition. Its only achievement has been the production of the record number of mental deficients to the square mile. Masses flock to the pictures like sheep to thrill at the sensations, that each has within his grasp if he only dared. But they dare not, they prefer the drug.

When these people have done with their wrecking tactics the rubbish heap will stir once more with fresh life. They will start again as they have often started before. New shams will rise to greet them, new brothels will line the



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streets, but they have learnt something and stored it away deep in the unconscious treasure house of the unified human mind.

The theatre as an institution still stands where it did, heedless of the parasites which crawl about it. It stands as a tree of knowledge of good and evil, a correction to the present so-called education, an educator of the emotions in common with all art. It can be well done, even in the history of this country it has been consistently well done. When it is not it is merely a brothel, a breeder of lunatics and of the mentally deficient, as it is now with rare exceptions.

Where will this end? Just exactly when and where we want it to. There is much good showmanship in London and the provinces, and it is even now pushing through the strata of sensationalism in patches. Man is and must always be right until he deliberately makes himself wrong. When we find a producer or manager who does what he wants without theorising, and never asks himself why he does it, then we have something that is worth paying for. It is perfectly easy for any fool to go out into the streets and provide facilities for the indulgence of vice, and easy to make a lot of money out of it too; but then if he has any measure of greatness he will know when to stop, and get out of the country before they sling him up on a lamp-post. He only waits if he has suicide tendencies. The retribution for insincerity is exactly the retribution that the insincere desires, namely extinction.

Man cannot go through life with his tongue in his cheek, he is essentially an unselfish animal, even when he invents a religion that tries to make him out a depraved brute. In our efforts to destroy ourselves we completely annihilate large tracts of land by upsetting Nature's balance and producing plagues of insects or other pests; so do we barge into the psychological field, creating catastrophes intellectually and spreading ruin about us with careless abandon until we drag ourselves, after years of painstaking effort, from these unnecessary morasses. The history of mankind is the history of a vast conflict with self, the history of a losing fight, fought by men against their better selves, against progress, which conquers always, sweeping them on or leaving their bodies to moulder by the wayside.



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Despite vague theories and logical machinations, man remains a creative animal, that is why he still exists. Let him stop for a moment and Nature will trample him underfoot, passing on to some better instrument. He has stooped here and there in the past, doubting, lazy, and his great mother Nature has engulfed him with silent, deadly swoop. So passed Greece and Rome. So pass those who want money only for money's sake.

Men have only to let themselves go, to say and do what they feel they want to, and they will inevitably forge ahead. There will be great things to add to the history of the theatre, and the cinema will yet crawl from the slimy ooze, shaking the barnacles from its cellulose hide. Only laziness and hedging spell disaster, a slithery glide from one obsequiety to another until the gulf opens and no one even troubles to write " Finis " to the work.

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# Tennis and the Theatre

## By Horace Shipp

To talk to the average person about "England" and English activities, if your mind has any serious preoccupation, such as politics, trade, science, or art, is to discover after a while that you are at hopeless cross-purposes. Duly it is borne home to you that your average person's conception of his country's success or failure depends entirely upon the prowess of our professional sports-men and -women at Lord's or Henley, Ranelagh or Wimbledon, and that whatever France may do at Genoa or the Hague is a matter of no importance so only that Mlle. Lenglen be beaten at Wimbledon, and that the world's markets are a secondary consideration to sculling cups and cricket trophies. We are no longer even a nation of shopkeepers, but a nation of wicket-keepers, sentimentally ascribing Waterloo to the playing fields of Eton and exalting the famous nonsense of Drake on Plymouth Hoe into a kind of national creed. Nor does it shake our self-esteem that even on these playing fields we seem to fall just short of our opponents.

This obsession of sport, which has already made public school and university life a physical rather than a mental thing, has spread from these to every phase and every class; the circulation of our newspapers is governed by it, the mass of current conversation is concerned with it, and the one commercial certainty in a day of failing trade is the gate money at football field or boxing ring.

Other considerations aside, however, it is a question of importance why interest in sport should so tremendously increase while that in the theatre declines. Psychologically there is an alliance between the two things which cannot be overlooked: sport is the physical equivalent of drama; it gratifies on its own plane those instincts of contest which lie at the roots of drama, and so far as the spectator is concerned it gives just those elements of



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surprise, of excitement, of uncertainty, which hold the attention focussed and stimulate the emotions in the dramatic performance. So for some minutes on the courts at Wimbledon Mlle. Lenglen or G. L. Patterson can hold the surplus imagination of thousands of people enthralled and entirely take possession of their intelligences. All this it will be realised is what primarily the theatre and the stage performance aims at achieving. But whereas in the matter of sport this hypnotism is the sum total of its reaction (unless one excepts the gambling business which is its curious concurrent), stage art merely uses this to subserve its great end of human self-expression and revelation. Sport can serve the purpose of taking the spectator out of himself in exactly the same way that drink or drugs can—by providing an unreal stimulant to emotion; art, and particularly the art of the theatre, can attain this end at its crudest with thrill-stuff and melodrama, but it can also attain it with lasting values when the mind of some great dramatist leads out of the little world of our personal lives into some broader places of the mind or spirit. A crowd may thrill as they watch the skilful work of some team at Lord's, but the game finished, nothing is left save the even tenor which they have for the time escaped, its lack of interest rendered the more boring in contrast with the excitement. A crowd may thrill as they watch *Hamlet*, their senses held and their attention focussed by the conflict which the play presents; but the play finished, their whole conception of life and humanity has been broadened by so much as the genius of the dramatist has woven into his work, and they have been able to re-gather from it.

It is probable that no small part of the blame for the present neglect of the theatre is due to the failure of the theatre and drama itself. If it is to succeed in its work of holding and swaying the minds of multitudes it must work along lines of intensification which will compel attention. Every word of the play must be so placed that the intelligence of the audience is held; every effect of scenery, production, lighting must "get at" the mind of the onlooker through the senses, intensifying, constructing, constraining so that there is no chink in the whole through which alien thought can creep. That



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is the business of theatre art. The moment there appears within a production some diversity of method or intention, the minds of an audience can escape from the hypnosis which the play seeks to impose, and from that time onward will, as likely as not, remain in critical detachment. It is this realisation which lies behind Expressionism as a stage method—the producer using his scenery not as mere background or decoration, but as a positive, ever-vital force to focus the attention of the audience upon what he holds to be the basis of the play.

Far more of the blame attaches to the fact that those who have been catering for the theatre-going public have debased their work to meet the demands of a C3 intelligence, only to find at last that this can be better supplied by the movies and the football field. On the heights the theatre can hold its own unchallenged; in the gutter it can be jostled by any sensation-mongering which the need of company promoters can conceive. The theatre cannot be saved by compromise.

If, then, to the theatre comes this call to intensive culture of the highest of which it is capable, there must come no less to a public rapidly losing the power of fine thought a similar call to its support. As an immediate reaction to the strain of war and the duration of horror, there seemed some excuse for slackness. Now the need is for a bracing of all the sinews of our national being. In the physical sphere sport has its place; only when we find it monopolising the intelligence of the majority of our fellows do we realise that it is being taken as a drug to thought. The theatre, which reflects the mental life of a nation as nothing else can, reveals ours at the lowest ebb, and we cannot at this period of the development of humanity hope to persist as a great nation on these terms. The world of the future is not to the strong, but to the intelligent. Even were it to the strong, our capacity for paying shillings at the gates of sports fields would give us small cause for optimism. The poverty of the theatre to-day is symptomatic of our real national poverty; a menace to our national being because it means that as a nation we are intellectually lax in a world increasingly governed by brain power.



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THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

# The New University of London

By Thomas Lloyd Humberstone

It is well to begin at the beginning and to canvass the question why the City of London had not established a University before the ancient Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were even conceived. London's first chronicler, Fitzstephen, describes London of the twelfth century as "the one principal seat of the Kingdom of England whose fame is spread abroad very far." He praises her wholesome air, her Christian religion, her strength, her situation, and the chastity of her matrons. She was "very pleasant also in her sports and pastimes, and replenished with honorable personages." The official educational system in those days consisted of three schools attached to great churches, these schools being "retained by privilege and ancient dignity." But in addition other schools, allowed "by goodwill and sufferance," were famous for their teachers of philosophy. Their scholars disputed for exercise sake, or for show, or for the pursuit of Truth, "the grace of perfection," or with rhetorical orations, speaking handsomely to persuade, observing the principles of Art and omitting no matter contingent.

Such conditions would appear favourable for the birth and growth of a great University. Sir George Buck, in his appendix to Stow's *Annales or General Chronicle of England*, published in 1615, is at great pains to prove that London actually possessed the third University of England. He gives a catalogue of the subjects in which instruction was offered in the City of London. Not only do we find the arts called liberal—such as one might expect to find at other seats of learning—but also most of the other arts and sciences "proper and fit for ingenious and liberal persons." First in the list is theology, "the chiefest science, the science of sciences, and the key to all know-



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ledge." Languages, "holy, learned, and strange," were professed; also free and subtle arts and an array of subjects which the educationist of to-day might regard as frivolous—the art of dancing, for example, and the art of revels, and pyrotechny. The "art gladiatore," or the noble art of self-defence, had its proper degrees and public trials. One learned to use the long sword, the rapier and dagger, the sword and buckler, the pike, the halberd, the longstaff and other lethal weapons. Swimming and riding also formed part of the education of the English gentleman; our forefathers had no wish to produce anything resembling the modern schoolma'am. Technical education? You could learn navigation and a science called cosmography, which no doubt had to do with the discovery of new worlds. Professional education? There was instruction in all branches of law, the common law, the law of conscience, civil law and canon law; in physic and surgery; and in *polemice*, or art military. Pure Art is represented by music and painting, and there are also such subjects as shorthand and—shades of Pelman—"art memorative." In London were to be found also very cunning architects, good chemists and alchymists, and odds and ends such as astrologers, antiquaries, philosophers, historians, and politicians. Our author gives details of the colleges, Inns of Court, and learned institutions in and near London, and claims for London not only the name and style of a University, but also a chief place in the catalogue of Universities. It lacked only the government and protection of an honorable Chancellor, an omission which the King his master could easily supply from a good choice of most grave and noble personages. The conclusion of his argument is worth quoting, and he adds after the word "Finis," as well he may, *Laus Deo.*

"Seeing then that there be read, taught, studied, and professed so many arts, faculties, and Sciences in this cittie of London, as in no Universitie more, and in fewe or none so manie. And that there be so many magnificent colledges, Athenæes, houses and schooles, founded and erected for them and their professors, and endowed with lands and revenewes by the auncient Kinges and Princes of this land, and by other noble, and worthie Benefactors, and unto their royall priviledges indulted, who can then deny that London is not onely the third Universitie of England, but also to be preferred before many other Universities in Europe or in any other parte of the world knowne." FINIS. *Laus Deo.*

The learned A. F. Leach examines this claim in a



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special chapter in Besant's *Survey of London*. He explains that the *trivium* or trivial task of the twelfth-century schoolboy included rhetoric and dialectic, as well as grammar, and the three famous schools were merely the forerunners of the "grammar schools" of a later generation. He admits, however, that a University might have developed out of these schools and their philosophical rivals, as happened at Paris and possibly also at Oxford. "*But it was not to be.*" The reasons he adduces do not appear to be altogether convincing, but may be quoted summarily, *quantum valeant*. The hum of markets and wharves was too loud, he says, for the voice of learning to make itself heard. Paris was the political, but not the commercial, capital of France. The King's Court and King's Chancery, the main avenues to success for clerks, were not in the twelfth century settled in London. Learning was cosmopolitan. The centralising influence of the Roman Church tended to make Europe a single nation. Thomas à Becket, one of London's most famous schoolboys, studied as a young man in Paris, and was there inoculated with the "fool fury of the Seine," with disastrous results. Curiously enough, the need for re-establishing this cosmopolitan spirit is one of the strongest arguments for setting up a new University of London; and it is hard to understand why mediæval London should not have provided for the wandering scholar.

We may skip agilely from the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth over two centuries. The need for a University of London was not apparently felt during this period; Oxford and Cambridge were themselves almost redundant. No less partial a witness than the recent Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities tacitly admits that the eighteenth century may be regarded as the least satisfactory in the known history of these Universities. The Universities had lost effectiveness through the supersession of University functions by the Colleges; and the State was indifferent to educational issues. "In an age of great individual genius and enterprise, all old-established institutions were more or less corrupt or lethargic." As to London, the spectacle of the empty classrooms and quarrelsome professors of Gresham College, described by our good friend Sir George Buck as "a little University," must



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have had a depressive effect on any educational reformer. Dr. Johnson could only suggest that the professors, instead of lecturing *gratis*, should be allowed to charge a small fee, say sixpence, and so have an incentive to obtaining an audience for their discourses.

We arrive in our time-Zeppelin at the dawn of the nineteenth century, a peculiar age, haunted by a craven fear of all political change, induced by the exciting events of the French Revolution. Walter Bagehot has called the period the Eldonine period, after the name of the Lord Chancellor, and says it is the most difficult thing to believe that Lord Eldon ever existed, so intense was his opposition to political reform. *Eppur si muove.* A mild but contentious enthusiasm for education, particularly for the labouring classes, was dominated by the figure of Brougham, one of the founders of University College in Gower Street. By a tortuous course and after much sectarian argument, the University of London got itself established A.D. 1836 as an examining board, originally to grant degrees to students of certain approved colleges. From the first it was prescribed that the degrees should be open to " persons of all religious persuasions, without distinction, and without the imposition of any test or disqualification whatever," and this great tradition of freedom and impartiality has been cherished ever since. The outlook of the University on colleges and schools and on struggling humanity in general was always somewhat cold and aloof. It failed to establish close and vital contact with changing educational conditions, and after further cataclysms of argument the University was re-constituted as a teaching University in 1900, bearing many of the scars of compromise.

The third incarnation now in process has come at the behest of the Government of the day, sweetened with magnificent generosity with a gift of 11½ acres of land behind the British Museum—the intellectual ganglion of the British Empire, if not of the " knowne world "—for the purposes of the new University. As the present generation, looking at St. Paul's Cathedral, remember that it was built by their ancestors after the Great Fire to show their faith in God, so our children, looking at a magnificent group of University buildings, will assuredly say that it was erected after the Great War to show their forefathers' faith in



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education and in a higher and nobler civilisation. The present position can be stated in the words used by the Government spokesman, Mr. Fisher, the Minister of Education, in a speech at University College on February 20th, 1922:

> What is the opportunity of London? Great Britain, very largely by reason of the superb *rôle* which the British race played in the War, largely also by reason of the moral eclipse of Germany, has now the opportunity of becoming one of the High Schools of the world. We have to anticipate a great increase in the number of students who will come to this country from the Dominions, from India, from the Crown Colonies, from the United States of America, and from the allied Powers of the Continent to pursue their studies under our great masters of Literature and Science . . . For the most part it is to be anticipated that this great river of students will flow to London; will flow to London, not to undergo examinations, but to sit at the feet of great teachers, to profit by their influence and their intellectual resources.

There are many lions and adders in the path. Mr. Fisher spoke with truth when he said that the University of London provided a large number of formidable and intricate problems; and with feeling when he admitted that many brilliant energies had been squandered and many sweet tempers soured in the gallant but forlorn attempt to solve the problem of the University. It is something, however, to realise that the problem is one of the highest order of difficulty, not to be solved by stenographers, neurasthenics, and counter-jumpers, but demanding in a special degree ability, loyalty, enterprise, imagination. How was the counterpart of the University of London in the New World established, Columbia University in New York, one of the greatest achievements in the whole history of University education? Readers of Dean Keppel's vivid history will realise that the creation of this great University was mainly the work of a series of brilliant Presidents—Barnard, Seth Low, and Murray Butler—who were freely accorded the status in the University which made their work practicable. After men, money will be required for the new University of London in large amounts. Stow's *Survey of London* devotes a number of pages to the generous benefactions and endowments of the citizens of London for the greater glory of their City. Thus:

> *William Eastfield,* Mercer, 1438, appoynted the executors of his goods to conuey sweete water from Teyborne, and to build a faire Conduit by Alderman berie church, which they performed. . . .



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Our task is to open a new Pierian spring to quench a world-thirst. If the need is explained, the wealthy citizens of London will surely loosen their purse-strings. Others who, like St. Peter, have no silver and gold, can give material, service, moral support. There is a University in Canada which was built in this way. Finally, one further elementary proposition. No great University has been built by argument. Rhetoric and dialectic may have been the best pabulum for the mediæval schoolboy, but, as Ambrose announced to a grateful world, it hath not pleased the Lord to give his people salvation in dialectic.

"A good start in a race," says Meredith, "is a kick from the gods." As we have seen, London may claim to have started its educational race with divine propulsion. If it has lagged behind somewhat in the long run of eight centuries, it will in the fulness of time take its due place in the race, without fuss or ostentation. London has never been conquered; its citizens, unbeaten, consented to crown William I. on a solemn assurance that he would not endure any man to offer it wrong. The crown of its educational system must be worthy of its glorious history.



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# England and France

## By Frederic Harrison

In the extreme crisis caused by the obstinacy of French statesmen to accept painful, but inevitable, facts, the old friends of France, who have held by the union of our two countries as the indispensable condition of European peace, are placed in a dilemma. We are loth to admit a separate, even an antagonistic, policy as necessary, but we are now convinced that to follow, even to abet, France in any scheme of trying to wring immediate gold from Germany would be her ruin, our own disaster, chaos in Europe, possibly even a new war. We must take our own course and give no support to any aggressive action by France. We will not accept the current view, the French view, that the *Entente* is ended. The *Entente*, in the sense of meaning identical views of the statesmen of our two countries, may be suspended; the good-will, the union of heart, between the French and the English peoples is not broken, cannot be broken, is a thing deeper and stronger than despatches and Cabinets. France and England are not in opposite camps: they are still Allies. But, in the imminent peril of bankruptcy and confusion throughout Central Europe, Britain is forced to act alone.

To me and my friends such an issue of the Great War is a painful duty, which nothing but a sense of responsibility can justify. For my own part, I think I am the oldest, and certainly the most consistent, of the public writers who have uniformly called for alliance and co-operation with France. From the rise of Bismarck in 1864, all through the war of 1870-71, in the foundation of the Republic by Gambetta, in the questions over Egypt and Africa, in the long menace to France by the German Empire from 1900 to 1914, from the first to the last hour of the Great War—I make bold to say that no voice has been raised in public with more constancy to stand by France. Our school has been unfairly accused, and even ridiculed, for its French sym-



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pathies. But we cannot be blind to the facts, that the letter of the Treaty of Versailles, the military policy of France ever since, the obstinacy of her statesmen in pressing for impossible exactions, and attempts to break up and beggar the German peoples, have brought our country to sore distress, have led France to the verge of a new war, and threaten European civilisation with catastrophe.

This is no idle panic of ours. All independent observers, all competent foreign publicists, say the same thing. France stands alone—has stood alone practically through all these negotiations and Conferences. It is futile to tell us that France is united, that Frenchmen look with horror to the pit of bankruptcy, unless their claim for payment in full is satisfied. We too are acutely conscious of all that France has suffered by the war, of the terrible ruin of her richest provinces, of the £1,600,000,000 which she owes to her bondholders. It is a cruel, an awful prospect to face: we know it: we ourselves have cruel suffering at home. But the fact that you have received deadly injuries, that ruin stares you in the face, does not justify you in committing social and national crimes and plunging into a career of miscellaneous destruction, like de Valera, because you are thwarted in your chosen policy. English common sense hears, with a melancholy smile, of the raving of the French Press—that we are betraying France, are her enemies, that we have ends of our own to serve, that we want other friends. Frenchmen are ever the victims of their hopes, their ideals, their suspicions, and their vanity. It is like the cry of a petulant and hysterical wife, whose husband will not agree to some dangerous folly she has set her heart on. "*You do not feel all I suffer! You do not care what becomes of me! You do not love me! You love another!*"

The practical question is, what are we to do? First, nothing to break up our alliance in any formal way. We should, by a Parliamentary vote, engage to support France with our whole forces, military, naval, financial, and international, against a new invasion by Germans. Great statesmanship even now might create a real League of Defence, of which England and France might make a defensive alliance with Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Scandinavia—possibly Italy and mid-Europe—without any menace to Germany. This would allay the fears of



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France, and even force her to reduce her unjustifiable and most irritating army. As to debts, we ought to modify the Balfour despatch by a rider to it—that we do not contemplate any pressing payment—and may in due course arrange an easy settlement. But we can no longer treat Germany as an enemy to be crushed and humiliated.

If all this did not content French irritation with us and she insisted on further military, national, and economic adventures of her own, the time has come for us to withdraw our whole force from German territory, to make our own terms with the German Republic for the restoration of exchange and the revival of trade, and to watch—with sorrow and anxiety—France preparing to follow a suicidal policy.



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# Musical Honours

## By Joseph Holbrooke

THE recent " Honours " scandal gives some of us much amusement. It is not surprising, for there are people of a kind who can always find wives who wish to be superior to their little round of acquaintances. But the " Honours " in music are just as fantastic. One rarely hears of the creator of music being singled out for any honour. It is always the singer, the fiddler, the pianist, and, strangest of all, the " conductor " who gets his robe of approbation, on all sorts of pleas. The only one I can possibly sympathise with, of the latter department, is Sir Dan Godfrey, who has for years pursued an ungrateful path of " encouraging native music " in Bournemouth, of all places. The result to the great art of music of course is nil; but at any rate we composers *can* point to Godfrey as a sturdy Briton who has done his best for all and sundry for a great many years.

The love of "novelties " in music too—this also was not a weakness of Godfrey's, who often performed the same work again and again. In London his attitude would have borne fruit by now. As it is, we have to find some explanation how it is possible for one of our conductors of music, recently, to talk about his " pioneer " work for Elgar or Rachmaninoff! Perhaps this gymnastic ability is to be compared with our frenzy for tennis, golf, hockey, polo, etc., in which we are always beaten by foreign competitors! This I am glad to see, as we have shown the way in sport for enough years, and it is time we settled down to the real love of something beautiful—not to mention the possibility of even *working* at it!

As we could not win the war single-handed, I feel sure we are on the upgrade, as a nation, in the artistic world!

But some judgment will have to be displayed. We cannot have one of our lady composers writing to the daily papers advocating our study to be in Germany if we want any " appreciation." Neither can we have a list announced, year after year, of numerous novelties at Queen's Hall, which cannot be of the least artistic value, as we never hear



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many of them again by the same orchestra. If music is going to be a " fashion," and a fashion only, we may as well put our cards on Mr. Darewski or Mr. Finck. Both these great artists are well known, and they give the public " what it wants." I wonder if they do. They certainly give the public what they get.

I think the same ineffable wisdom which stops the citizen having any tobacco or chocolate after 8 p.m. gives us our musical programmes and our Jewish cinemas. The latter are, without doubt, a most demoralising influence to the whole country. But while this deplorable fare may bring in much profit to the Exchequer in tax, there is no fear of any interference with its Semitic and slushy propaganda.

In the actual performance of our musical work there is only an appeal to the journalistic interest. There is no appeal to the public. The work is not played often enough for this purpose. In our " schools of music " one has a sorry spectacle. Neither the Guildhall School, nor the Trinity College, nor the Royal College of Music have produced one big British name or creator of music. Through academic influence and lack of judgment many are encouraged who have nothing to say, many are talked about with the same result.

The Royal Academy, which has recently been displaying some of its favourite wares, and generally enjoying itself, did not show us very much judgment, but although its record is that it has encouraged nobody who " had the goods," the way of art is such that it is the *only* school which has produced the few men of value we have!

We can point with pride, as a nation, to Goring Thomas, Sterndale Bennett, Arthur Sullivan, William Wallace, Granville Bantock, and Edward German. Modesty prevails against my mention of another! But the names above will live, and you will not read this in any *Daily Mail* or any other paper.

The lack of judgment which is so criminal in our music is that many fine works are produced and they are not reproduced. Hence they lie on the shelf unknown to our public, or the foreigner. There never was a country which ignored its best men like Great Britain. This no doubt is the reason we possess Shakespeare, Blake, Drake, Milton,



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Keats, Turner, Shelley, Byron, Clive, and a few others of European fame.

The ceaseless advocacy of academic music in our Press is without avail. It is heard, and there it ends. The never-ending praise of the worthless should have put our music above the German by now! The journalist never found a genius in his little life, indeed he does *not* justify his existence. He should bring the artist to the public as often as he can, *whether he is* (the artist) *heard or not.*

If my name is known at all, it is known for my outspoken exposures of the things we should try to remedy in our art. I have nothing to gain by this, only everything to lose. Life is short, but art is long. The best *British* names, and tested, in our musical world to-day are undoubtedly Elgar, Ireland, Wallace, Forsyth, Bax, Brian, Scott, and Goossens. British names these seem to me, but how often do we hear their works? What do we *know* about their work? What does the " omnipotent critic " *know* about their work?

As I read yet another sententious column on foreign music in any paper I pick up, containing hot appreciation of something long ago accepted, I remember the fate of poor Bizet.

Most people love *Carmen* to-day. This is the reception this work got from the so-called critics and public when it first appeared in " musical " France :

*Carmen* was produced at last, on the 3rd of March in that year (1875). The Habanera—of which, by the way, he wrote for Mme. Galli-Marié no less than thirteen versions before he came across, in an old book, the one we know—the prelude to the second act, the toreador song, and the quintett were encored. The rest fell absolutely flat.

The blow was a terrific one to Bizet. He had dreamed of such a different lot for *Carmen.* Arm in arm with Guiraud he left the theatre, and together they paced the streets of Paris until dawn. Small wonder he felt bitter; and in vain the kindly Guiraud did his best to comfort him. Had not *Don Juan,* he argued, been accorded a reception no whit better when it was produced in Vienna; and had not poor Mozart said, " I have written *Don Juan* for myself and two of my friends "? But he found no consolation in the fact. The Press, too, cut him to the quick.

Even Du Locle—who of all men should have supported it—played him false.

He never wrote more than a few pages of *Geneviève.* He got worse and worse. But even so, the end came all too suddenly, and on the night of the 2nd of June he died—died as nearly as possible at the exact moment when Galli-Marié at the Opéra Comique was singing her song of fate in the card scene of the third act of his *Carmen.*

The sad fate of Bizet is sadly typical.



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# The War's Benefaction

By Robert Briffault

It may seem ungenerous to recall the gravity and earnestness with which, until eight years ago, the restorative and invigorating virtues of the ordeal of battle were vaunted, and not by any means in Prussia only. Distinguished philosophers, like William James, whose words carried authority, spoke with deep conviction and no less confidence than flashy perorators of the beneficent effects, nay, of the organic necessity of the " baptism of blood." The man at the club sapiently nodded assent to the words of the sages, and declared his faith that what was needed to rouse Europe from its too downy couch of ease and apathy and to lay restless elements of disloyalty and discontent was " a good old war." That wisdom is now turned to irony too grim to be pressed. The preconised panacea has proved the most atrocious of quack poisons. Not material ruin alone, passing the dreams of Vandal or Mongol fury, is the sole trophy that graces victors and vanquished alike, more especially the victors, but the spiritual effects of the " baptism of blood " are acutely manifest as an exhaustion of the soul, an arid, bewildered, almost paralytic mental devastation even more desolate than the material wreckage. Such have proved the regenerating virtues of the blood-bath.

But the values of all events are completely transmuted in the perspective of history. To no event in the career of humanity, to no institution, measured by their effects and consequences, are the terms " good " and " bad " applicable without qualification. When the effects of each on the development and welfare of the race are computed, good and evil are discovered to have issued out of every event, every institution inextricably commingled; and ethical evaluation is confounded. The best and noblest of human things are lamentably imperfect, that is to say, they have been the direct causes of untold evil. Even the



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most passionate apologist of religious institutions, for example, must perforce allow that there is no form of evil to which they have not given rise, and that the path of their progress is strewn with slaughter, injustice, persecution, with wars, with hatred and malice, with obscurantism. So in like manner those things which wear the grossest and most patent aspect of evil are, in their effects, but imperfectly bad. Those who have proclaimed the virtues of the baptism of blood have been misguided by that soul of good in things evil. Wars of conquest, unredeemed by any extenuating motive, have welded tribal humanity into vaster aggregates; and without them civilisation would probably not have been possible. The nearest approach to the unification of Western humanity into a community of free nations was effected by the *pax Romana* which was the outcome of unjustifiable cupidities and aggressions. And the trampling down of that first European civilisation under the hoofs of barbarism was the occasion of the birth of human society into a higher phase. The worst infamies and the vilest evils are productive of good, if only by virtue of the stimulus they furnish to the opposing forces which they inevitably evoke. It is that imperfection of human evil that justifies the *advocatus diaboli*. And, on the other hand, the appeal of all aspirations towards redemption and reform is largely discounted, not so much by the practical difficulties with which their realisation is fraught as by the manifest evils which they are clearly seen to entail. Humanity shrinks in terror before the price demanded by Utopias, and it is probable that the immediate results of the most devoutly desired and most precious liberations would be chaos and suffering enough to justify all mean and myopic " I told you so's." The melioristic, progressive character of the forces which actuate human evolution is manifested not so much by their fertility in good as by their invariable ingenuity in turning evil to account.

The cataclysm of the war would be a singular exception did it not contain elements of permanent benefaction; and it may well be that posterity, viewing it in the larger perspective, will perceive it chiefly as the occasion of momentous advances. Of some of those effects we may even now take account; and they are of no little significance. The very causes which lie at the root of the spiritual and



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mental desolation of the post-war world are manifestations of basic facts apt to be turned into instruments of salvation. The ordeal of battle, the baptism of blood, so lately preconised in the light of time-honoured, almost primeval illusions, have been the most potent destroyers of illusions that have ever shaken the mind of the modern world. The mental devastation from which we are at present suffering, even more than from the material and economic ruin, consists in a large measure in the destruction wrought amongst landmarks immemorial by which Europe was wont to steer subconsciously its accustomed course, regarding them as almost eternal facts rooted in the constitution of the universe. The war has shattered those landmarks of the established order to fragments no less ruinous than the demolished old-world streets of Flemish Ypres. Many of the eternal facts are reduced to obsolescent archaisms as ineffectual as are the swan-haunted moats and the battlements of the mediæval burgher-city. Inadapted conventions and unrealities which had withstood untouched the assaults of criticism, scoffed at as visionary and denounced as subversive, have been and are now being broken down by the eloquence of facts in the crudest and grossest form of economic realities. The new heaven and the new earth which the panegyric facundity of propaganda had announced have turned to ghastly delusion. But it is nevertheless truly under a new heaven and on a new earth that after-war Europe is now standing. In that new world the immutable facts of the established order have suffered a transmutation into strangely provisional expedients of questionable value.

The self-contained Sovereign State, for example, rounded off in its self-sufficiency, circumscribed and insulated within the ambit of its interests, which in the Armida's garden of pre-war Europe represented to the individual the social aggregate to which he stood related, has probably been fatally shattered by the war and its consequences beyond all hope of reconstruction. The State, which through many transformations had come to be represented as the protector of the individual and of his interests—a conception cynically expressed by the English doctrine which made " a stake in the country " the test of citizenship—is now discovered to be quite unable to



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perform its function of expanded egoism. The interests of the individual with a stake in the country can no longer be protected by the self-contained State; that protective function calls for the intimate co-operation of other States, of foreign States, of enemy States even. The sovereign State, in its final avatar of protector of individual interests, exists no longer. Although the fact had become patent enough to the pre-war recluse, his disrespectful criticism of the immutable fact was waved aside as visionary and unpatriotic. Now the veriest shopman is disturbed in his soul, nay in his very shop-till, by the questionable efficiency of the immutable fact.

Under the new heaven the immutable facts of the established order which had hitherto made shift to serve as the currency of the world's traffic have suddenly become depreciated, as are artificial monetary currencies, and the established order has become insolvent. The war has shattered immutable facts rooted in the constitution of the universe, and has revealed them as expedients and conventions which have ceased to perform their function and have become unadapted. The war has been the dispeller of delusions.

And that is no small service. Properly speaking, it is the highest service that can be offered to humanity. Social evolution is, like all biological processes, a process of adaptation to changing conditions; it is a process in which optical illusions are the chief obstacles, and disillusion the chief instrument of deliverance and growth. The iconoclastic hammer-blows that have been dealt to our illusions, our cocksureness and prejudices have enlarged the general mind. Those things which are now admissible within the sphere of practical politics would have staggered our pre-war predecessors; they barely succeed in surprising us. We have lost confidence in our prejudices. Appeals to them are losing their force. It is becoming increasingly questionable whether mere slogans, invectives, abuse, hatred, are effective instruments; whether mental violence is not as futile as physical violence. There is still, of course, a superabundance of such futility, but its ineptitude is growing more generally manifest. We are ap proaching a state of mind in which it is inconclusive merely to howl, " Hun ! " or " Bolshey ! " The world has grown



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too complex; the complexity of its problems is too delicately intricate to be approached with sledge-hammers. Violence, physical or mental, is, as an instrument, becoming manifestly unsuitable. The situation suggests that intelligence and tolerance may prove more adequate.

The post-war problems demand an imagination that can lift the world above the ruts of precedents; they demand idealism. For all calculations of interests, whether of the individual or of the individual community, are stultified by the interdependence of all the factors of the social complex; they involve the interests of all other individuals and of all other groups; and every form and aspect of those interests involve all the aspects and all the elements of human life. Economic facts involve non-economic facts; prices do not rest upon supply and demand alone, but upon faith, hope, justice; for production, like military power, depends ultimately on the capacity to command loyalty. A world, a social community that cannot command assent, respect, faith in the heart of its defenders and of its wealth-producers, that, in short, does not accord with their ideals, is a world reduced to impotence and destitution—in the economic no less than in the spiritual sense. Force and pressure definitely count no longer; for in an interlinked and interdependent world force and pressure are merely redistributed in a universal recoil; they do not cripple and injure opponents, they cripple and injure the world. The scheming protection and advancement of isolated interests has come to defeat its own objects; therefore there is nothing left but idealism. The self-sufficiency of the individual having broken down, the self-sufficiency of the State having broken down, the self-sufficiency of organised force having broken down, the self-sufficiency of economic control having broken down, the self-sufficiency of artificial bases of wealth having broken down, interests have become impersonal, and can be protected by impersonal, that is, by idealistic, policies only. It is an idealistic policy, a policy which aims at what ought to be, and not at what will pay Jones and Co. in the present emergency, which is alone equal to coping effectively with the generalised and interlocked complexity of the new world.

Those lessons we are slowly learning. The trouble is



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that, though the general mind is imperceptibly expanding, the world and its problems have expanded very much more than the general mind, so that the latter still remains too narrow and too little to embrace them. It is still insufficiently imaginative, insufficiently bold; it is still unequal to the occasion.

And the occasion will unfortunately not wait; it will not abide the completion of our education. The occasion will pass. And all the difference between victory and disaster, between chaos and reconstruction, between the solution of the world-problems set by an impatient and inexorable Sphinx and our being devoured by the monster, depends precisely on our capacity to expand our minds to the proportion of the world-problems *in time*.

Europe has much waste, much inefficiency, much folly to make up for. Time is not in its favour. We have too long ignored it and comforted ourselves with the formula that " The times are not ripe." The time for timid opportunism is, on the contrary, passing. Our purposes will not bear whittling down to acceptable formulas; our formulas must be the last logical consequences of our aims and of our needs.

Two directions in the course of European development appear at the present juncture possible; and two only. Either European civilisation will adapt itself to a new heaven and a new earth, or it will not. Either it will learn from experience to discard passionate prejudice and predatory policies altogether, to shake itself free from the dead hands of ineffectual phantasms of the past, and to live as a federation of free peoples by the light of new and larger loyalties; or the tides of dissolution and barbarism will sweep over it; and human evolution will, as it has done before, pursue its path by first clearing it of ineffectual phantasms that will not or cannot adapt themselves to a world which is no longer the world where they moved in the flesh. Either the formulas which we shall write shall be sufficiently big and bold, or the world-process will wipe the slate clean.



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# Lord Northcliffe

## By Austin Harrison

SINCE 1918 death has been reckoned only too cheap, and all through Europe men, the big and the small, have fallen, leaving scarcely a ripple behind, as if indeed life itself was of no consequence. The death of Lord Northcliffe cannot be so regarded or disregarded. His loss is at once national and imperial. He leaves a gap in the vitality of the country. Northcliffe was in fact the supreme portent of his age which, as it fashioned him, he in turn came to dominate and constrict. He appeared at a turning-point in our history, at the end of the Victorian era, at the precise moment when the teeming inarticulate multitude, having learnt to read and write, had no sustenance, nothing to bite or chew across the breakfast table. Our Press at that period was grave, austere, stodgy, written by a class for a class, without thought of the younger generation whose only newspaper pabulum consisted in *The Police Gazette*, *Wedding Bells*, or *The Family Herald* and other quasi-Puritanical productions. We had no Sunday Press, no Labour Press, no Plebeian Press. *The Times* was an oracle. The Conservatives had their party organs, the Liberals theirs; otherwise the people were uncatered for, and spotting this in his teens with that unerring insight which in Northcliffe amounted to genius, he set himself to be the Matthew Arnold of his time in the form of newspaper revolution.

How he accomplished this task, from what queer origins he rose step by step from *Answers*, *Chips*, *Comic Cuts*, *Forget-Me-Not*, *Home Sweet Home*, etc., to the venture of *The Evening News* in partnership with the late Kennedy Jones, to the halcyon brilliance of *The Daily Mail*, and eventually to the ownership of *The Times*, this is his romance which to-day is a Fleet Street legend. He possessed pre-eminently the lucky touch. Coming up with, and as the sponsor of, a new public, he carried his public with him and became its godchild. His hand on a news-



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paper turned misfortune into fortune. After the foundation of *Answers*, I doubt if anyone who ever worked with him deemed it possible that any newspaper belonging to the "Chief" could fail. He was in the newspaper sphere Napoleonic.

When I first met him, he was emerging from the status of "Mr. Alfred" to the rank of a nobleman, and he had just purchased *The Observer*. In two minutes he explained the business—would I be editor? The money was good. "What about Free Trade?" I asked, for we were then in the midst of the Free Trade struggle, and I had my doubts. His answer was typical. "You don't read *The Daily Mail;* if you did, you would know that I have recently signed an article stating that no newspaper of mine would ever be Protectionist." I was impressed with the signature A. H. (which happened to be mine also) and took on the editorship. But within two months my hour struck; Sir Alfred became a Peer.

My career on *The Observer* was ended, for I felt that I could not change my convictions to order. I had not been made a nobleman. An editor, I held, must possess principles and convictions. I was asked not to write on politics.

Three months later, returning from Morocco, I found that I had been surreptitiously if discreetly superseded. But I was not going to be "fired" like a lamb, and I refused to quit. This led to extraordinarily funny scenes and finally to a personal interview with the Chief in which he expressed his "displeasure" at the way I had been treated and roundly abused his subordinates. I stuck to my contract. "You can't," he said. "I can," I replied. Then we had a regular set-to.

He called me a "snivelling Jew." I too questioned his lineage. He looked almost like violence; at last he looked at the clock.

"I've wasted fifteen minutes on you," he said. "You must work your money off somehow. How?" I took the hint. "I'll be dramatic critic of *The Daily Mail*," I said. He was delighted, gave me a revised contract, and we went out to lunch and talked about the coming world-war.

That was in 1907. We did not meet much again till 1915, for the Chief never forgot or forgave, when



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suddenly he sent for me. It was a Sunday a few days after *The Daily Mail* had been burnt on the Stock Exchange as the result of the attacks on Lord Kitchener. He was in bed (he often took to his bed when distressed), looking deeply worried. Blinds were drawn to shut out the light, and as I gazed down on his seared and rather anxious face I could not help noting how much he had altered, he whom I had originally known so young and handsome. He went straight to the point.

"I trust your opinion," he began. "Now tell me. Am I right about the shell shortage or not?"

I told him I thought his method deplorable but that the facts were correct. Curiously enough, I happened to have been given the exact figures of the French and of our munitions output a few days before by a Frenchman who certainly knew the facts, and I was fully cognisant of the grave danger of our position. He told me he had been strongly urged to apologise—should he? I could not resist asking why he sought my advice. He said: "You will tell me the truth." I advised him not to, it would be entirely misunderstood. "You must stand to your guns," I said. There ensued a long pause. "Shall we win?" he asked suddenly. I said we should, but in my opinion only with the aid of America. He agreed, and, shaking me by the hand, he lay back with his eyes half shut. As he appeared to have nothing more to say, I thought it best not to speak, and so we sat for nearly two hours without exchanging a word. At last he turned towards me and asked for a cigar.

"I'm glad you came," he said. "I know now I'm right. I shall carry on till we are through." At the door I looked back. He was lying motionless. The half profile was remarkably fine. He seemed the embodiment of human will, a terrible foe. As I lingered, he said very deliberately, "You and I will never forget this afternoon."

After that we met a good deal, but as the war changed its character and he rose higher in the political firmament we drifted once more apart. I met him in the street in 1917 on the eve of his mission to America. It was just before the great offensives. I was astonished to hear he was leaving at that critical hour which the French thought would be decisive. His reply was typical.



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"You and I know," he said, "that the offensives will fail. Only one thing matters—America. When will America be ready to fight? I'm going to find out."

That was the man and largely the secret of his success. He always went round the circle, ascertained the facts, and was himself a storehouse of factual information about all kinds of odd subjects. But his great gift lay in his judgment and selection of men. There he was uncanny. He knew human nature instinctively. He could size up a man in a moment. He knew exactly what kind of men he could work with and what kind he could not work with. Nor is it true to say he was disloyal; to not a few of his associates he was a wonderful friend, and he breathed vitality into his whole staff; his machine was perhaps the most efficient organisation in England. "I made a mistake over you," he explained to me once. "You have convictions. The new journalism has no room for them."

Undoubtedly his rapid success was largely due to this faculty of man-reading associated with an infectious driving-power and rapidity of decision. As a man he was kindly, extraordinarily simple, generous and fascinating. He paid magnificently and was always doing personal acts of kindness, so that, despite the eliminations which at one time littered Fleet Street, he was revered by his associates, who really owed him everything. He knew that. He had implicit faith in the Scot. He gathered about him a chosen band and played with them like a cat. He was very Irish. Indeed the clue to the understanding of this tempestuous, wayward, elliptic, capricious, scintillating man was his Irish blood which gave him logic when least expected, a natural zest for intrigue and fighting, and an impulsiveness and volatility which in a Scot would be termed irresponsibility. He was very un-Irish in all that may be called the æsthetics.

He rarely read, though he devoured newspapers. Music, the arts, literature, poetry, these meant nothing to him. He was curiously unromantic, but he had a sense of humour and was highly sensitive and inordinately vain. His entire being seemed to be wrapped up in newspaper production, and though he could relapse with delightful boyishness and evident pleasure, work was his whole life, all the rest from food to finance seeming to be of quite



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secondary and even tiresome significance as if obstructive to his central purpose and being. No man was less snobbish or cared less for society than Lord Northcliffe. He was always splendidly himself, interested in all manner of men, always alert, absolutely without respect for tradition or reputation, indifferent to all show, never coarse or vulgar, ever watching, thinking, dissecting, anticipating, and a great listener.

That also was one of his secrets; he could listen. He was conscious of his own limitations and always ready to learn, to hear what the other man had to say and to judge him accordingly. Open to all members of his staff, he invariably found time to give any man a hearing, and he was always acquiring knowledge, correcting values, sorting out men, scheming, preparing this or that blow, thirsting for fresh fields. His intellectual capacity was remarkable. He had a stupendous memory for facts and faces. He was exact, and absolutely single in his interest, which consisted in anything applicable to the newspaper business, and so he was constantly making discoveries—he had the artist's sense of recreation—which became Press stunts: thus sweet-peas, bread, spiritualism, etc., which in his eyes were good copy. His three personal failures were over soap, the women's *Daily Mirror*, and Mr. Lloyd George; otherwise whatever he touched turned into gold. He had a Shakespearian fellow-feeling with the masses whom in other respects he hardly knew. All theory was Chinese to him. Even Party politics left him at heart cold. He had no philosophy, no fundamentals, and no preconceived notions. When he set out to conquer Fleet Street his mind was virgin soil. I don't suppose any man ever troubled less about what was or had been or was more free from prejudice and the fixed ideas and canons of conventional instruction; he was the pure individualist, the Irishman, himself alone.

His newspaper direction was consequently always journalistic. The burning questions of the time were to him so many exploitable movements, he himself rarely took the trouble to study them or form an opinion upon them. That was neither his interest nor his job, and until the war his public realised it (*vide* his press Tariff Reform failure). All abstract thought, from religion downwards, bored



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him. His concern was movement, the journalisticisation of human motives and actions, the turning of this and that cry, thought, discussion, or movement into copy understandable by the multitude. Thus, trifles were to him of the first importance, and he saw everything as a press potential. Journalism was colour, not depth or opinion, and so when he first wrote during the war from France one of his telegrams referred chiefly to the jam-pots encumbering the roads. His power of concentration was prodigious, and in the early days he worried himself into all kinds of minor nervous illnesses, and at one period he lived on cheese. Intuition, perception, vision—these were his outstanding instincts, and he knew that he could rely upon them. Having mobilised the interests of the mob, he set out to exploit the business side, which in a newspaper lies in advertisement. His newspapers became a commercial business in which the advertisements were profit. He succeeded triumphantly. His last achievement in this direction was the insurance ramp which has practically turned what are called net-sales certificates into insurance coupons.

On one subject only he never swerved—the coming war. His interest in me lay chiefly in some books I had written years ago on that matter, and when war came his patriotism, which was a splendid sincerity, brought him into the front rank of the national life. From the first day he meant to win, and without all doubt the pertinacity and vigour of his efforts were of enormous national value to the cause. He lived war. He thought of nothing else. He was the incarnation of the will to win, and his name will always be associated with the Allied victory.

At the same time I think it warped his judgment. His great weakness, which lay in his disdain of thought and idea, his indifference to causes and abstract criticism, led him to take a purely materialistic view which as the war went on tended to weaken his perceptions and narrow his outlook so that he appeared to lose that old sense of balance which was one of his main assets. He came to see himself too personally, to be too amenable to flattery, to be over-autocratic, prone to preposterous generalisations, and when he took to writing I felt sure that something was wrong, for I remember him once telling me solemnly that



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the day I saw him writing instead of getting others to write for him I might know that he was failing. He was. Not long afterwards he was taken ill. He died with the dramatic suddenness with which he took London by storm as a youth.

In Northcliffe the restless soul of unconquerable man burnt like a white flame. He was the avatar of a generation casting off the traditions and shibboleths of a great epoch. However harmful his work may have been in certain real respects (it would be difficult to dispute this), in many ways his influence has been good in that democratically it has been liberative—this in a sense difficult to judge at this juncture. He has "'canned" democracy, so to speak, Americanised its promptings and yearnings, so that to-day we can hardly speak of a class press, and incidentally he has greatly raised the financial status of journalists. The danger of Fleet Street to-day, as its Chieftain leaves it palpitating with mob power and commercialism, is its inability to counter the passions, foibles, vanities, and prejudices of the hour, seeing that the people are its masters and that the successful appeal resides with the passions rather than with the sanity of the consumer. We cannot foresee the results of a press which has lost its perspective, which can no longer appeal to the culture, commonsense, and knowledge of the governing oligarchy; but probably there will again shortly be a change. The personal reign of Lord Northcliffe is over. So fierce a light cannot go out without leaving deep traces and a great vacuum behind him.

The King is dead—long live the King! Yet it is never so. Northcliffe's magnetism, his business astuteness, his untiring energy, his prescience, power, and pre-eminence as trader in the minds of men, were a unique combination which we are not likely to see repeated in this generation: and Northcliffe was Irish. I come back to that. His complete catholicity, his ease of manner, his delightful spontaneity, his savage independence, his ruthlessness, quickness, adaptability, resourcefulness, courage, and indifference, the heart of his approach and attack, all this was Irish, and it was because of these qualities which gave him a natural critical attitude that he so frequently exasperated friend and foe, often



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struck for what was right, notably over America, over the Empire, over Ireland, and was in countless ways helpful to the needs of the public. He never rested, was never satisfied, looked always to the next thing. Such a man with such a compass is not likely to relight Fleet Street in our time, and perhaps it is as well.

We cannot yet estimate his full stature. To all who knew him, especially those who ever worked with him, his memory will be ineffaceable. We, whoever we are, friend or opponent, will never forget the astonishing vitality of this rather lonely man so strangely generous yet so vindictive, his charm, his capacity of living dangerously, his immense egoism and overpowering success. I think his European attitude since 1919 was wrong economically (it has been proved so), and that he showed traces of want of proportion and judgment only to be accounted for by illness brought on by excessive strain in war. When he died, his work was done. Like all ruling natures, he had many enemies, but he had also many devoted friends. He leaves us wondering, not a little uncertain. I shall think of him always as part child, part Titan, iconoclast and builder, half amused at his own success, doing many wrong things and many good things, the Irish Playboy refreshingly simple, eager, boyish and turbulent, yet revolving Fleet Street round his thumb until his riches encumbered him, and almost without knowing it his name became synonymous with England and the Empire. No man was more devoted to the imperial idea. No man was better informed about American politics. On these questions he was eminently constructive.

He was a kind of Walt Whitman without the poetry, without the Bard's spirituality, with his cataloguing sense, his vision, his revolutionary spirit, his spontaneous joy in the things and springs of our daily toil, embracing all life as the garden of journalistic effort to be and to be thrown aside. What he lacked was a moral background. He had no ethics. His alchemy was self-confidence, instinct bubbling with affection for what generically one may term the office-boy.

Are we to think of Northcliffe as genius or even as a torchbearer in the sense of Gladstone, Pitt, Wellington, Bismarck, Cavour, Lincoln? I cannot think so. If sheer



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success is the test, then certainly Northcliffe's claim to immortality is assured. But material success is ephemeral. Of Napoleon, only his roads and code survive the soldier. Even so solid a public figure as Mr. W. H. Smith, who in his day stood as the exemplar of all that we prized in the national life, is to-day hardly remembered, so true it is that only creation lives and that in the end art perhaps alone is immortal. The glorification of the trivial is Northcliffe's legacy to the Press. It is Britain's present weakness. Newspapers are no longer vehicles of free opinion or channels of truth and thought. They are the totalisator of the unreal, the superficial, the artificial, and editors are the mannequins of their trade. An empire cannot be run constructively on " red herrings." Northcliffe, despite all his power, has left no school of thought or style, produced no great writer, for, unlike Napoleon, his generals were not chosen for the quality of merit, but for the merit of their qualities. He was intolerant of individualism. There is a story about President Wilson which seems relevant. Wilson said he never gathered about him the " big " men because they " devitalised " him. It was so with the Chief. He was an inspirer, a matchless utiliser, he was not a creator. If a judgment upon Northcliffe's career is to be passed, it is that he was the great revolutionary, the *Zeitgeist*, of his time.

Britain has lost its most restless personality. He wound up an epoch, crossed swords with the fate of the next one, and died, as he had lived, fighting. He will be accounted one of the challenging forces of the English race, a dynast, a maker of history.



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# Marriage

## By Jane Burr*

THE code of marriage towards which the civilised races are tending is what might be called Progressive Monogamy. This means that one man and one woman will live together in absolute faithfulness as long as they find rest and peace in one another, and will separate when this rest and peace is no longer possible.

The primary object of marriage is to beget and bear offspring, and on this basis man is at one with all mammals and most birds. The secondary object of marriage is the development of spiritual love between two persons, a love that stimulates and liberates our finest and most exalted activities.

Every marriage starts out with an effort to explain and to understand, but cross-currents soon become so involved that each party automatically decides it is easier to submit to fine cruelty than to assert himself. When both individuals are completely crushed and mutually owned, then the world with charming cynicism says, " This is a happy marriage."

In spite of the evidence of misery among the married people all about us, men and women continue to plunge into the great adventure. They plunge because they are lonely, and the younger they are the more lonely they are, therefore the more easily they fall in love and out again.

Loneliness is the greatest tragedy of the universe. The loneliness of youth is more devastating than the loneliness of age. There are millions of young people pacing the city streets and the country lanes in a frenzy of loneliness, separated from other lonely boys and girls because of timidity, inaccessibility, convention, and the sheer lack of a little cash.

* Jane Burr, known as "The Knickerbocker Woman," not being permitted by contract to write for the United Press, explains here the lines along which she opines the new "code" will be evolved.



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Over the civilised globe there hangs this tragedy of women and this tragedy of men—those who are free longing for bondage, those who are in bondage longing for freedom, everybody searching for the pure white flame, yet everybody compromising with sordidness that could be avoided, if only a new attitude could be legitimised.

No one wishes to abolish marriage. Pray don't imagine I am a wrecker or amoralist. Marriage cannot be abolished. It has always existed and always will exist. Even snakes go in pairs.

The thing that progressive people want to abolish is marriage as it exists to-day—in other words, the marriage of cast-iron convention no longer suitable to emancipating womanhood.

Marriage that is " made in heaven " usually ends in a locality somewhere beneath the earth's surface.

Intelligent people want marriage made on earth, where under decent conditions it might have a chance of remaining normal and lasting.

The first step towards the sane handling of the problem is to destroy the time-honoured cabal against youth. Poor youth! Nobody will be honest with him, nobody will tell him the truth.

When two young people feel a chemical excitement nobody warns them that after marriage the excitement will disappear and that they will stare into each other's eyes as one stares into the eyes of a stranger.

No matter how wretched our own marriage may have been, we teach our children that as it was so must it be, all's well with the world. Perhaps through youth's expectations, we clutch at romance once removed; perhaps through intended kindness, we display for him only the brilliance of the shield of love, concealing for a little while the blackness that lies hidden on the other side.

Wouldn't it be quite possible, by a truthful education, to avoid the chemical age? Instead of firing the mind of youth with insatiable desires, couldn't we teach him that passion is impersonal and fleeting, that friendship is personal and lasting; that passion may be felt for a being whose language we do not speak, but friendship is the result of understanding another's subtlest and most sacred emotions?



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Advocates of " The Love Feast " will say, " You are circumventing nature."

Well, why not?

We circumvent nature in the matter of roses, cactus plants, and pigs; why not show an equal interest in the cultivation of the human race? We have been sadly neglectful of poor humanity.

If we were taught from childhood the ugliness as well as the beauty of life, wouldn't we be qualified to choose a peaceful companion with whom we might raise the best cabbages in the neighbourhood, instead of wasting our energies (after marriage as well as before) in the hunt for an infantile, Arabian Nights illusion that is nowhere to be found?

By downright accident we sometimes emerge from the chemical throes of love with a partner who brings us peace. How then does society force us to handle our stroke of luck?

It forces us to live in the same house, to spend every possible moment together, to give up our old haunts and our old friends, to involve each other in the dull grind of domestic and economic machinery, only too often to suffer untold miseries.

The result is the wearing away of our finer sensibilities, the warping of our personalities, the slow on-creeping of monotony from which even a hibernating bear would struggle to escape.

Presuming a more useful and intelligent race of the future, a man and a woman who found peace in one another would go on with their separate jobs, live in their accustomed nooks, continue their old friendships, and cease to regard marriage as a finality, as at present. In other words, in an ideal state, husbands and wives would treat one another with the same consideration and decency as they naturally accord to utter strangers.

When divorce is universally granted on reasonable grounds, as is now the case in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, no one will be thrilled by an illegal union, divorces will cease to be a Press stunt, no one will run away on holidays alone. Men and women will abandon the possessive idea upon which conventional marriage—and love—was founded in the good old days.

The liberation of marriage will automatically cause the



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commercial and vulgar standard of luxury to go down and the standard of love will rise; conventionality will be swept into the ash-heap and a comradeship established between the sexes in which the opportunity of choice will be enlarged. Technical virginity will cease to be offered in exchange for life support and all stigma removed from a girl who has loved and given herself in love before marriage.

Children will, of course, be the greatest possible gift to the State, and the woman who produces them will be provided for, protected, and honoured. After all, this is a question of education.

Where and when there is no obligation to remain in bondage, and no disgrace attached to release, it is very possible that we shall settle down without undue commotion and turmoil to prove the morality of the new marriage code, and continue faithful to one mate " till death do us part."

Progressive Monogamy would then be real monogamy, because resting on free sanction, the one man and the one woman, in a spontaneous, unfettered union, for the first time in the history of the world.



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# Europe's Gold Bankruptcy

By C. P. Isaac

THE Genoa Conference was held to rehabilitate the financial condition of Europe. The measure of its failure can be seen in the rapid downfall of the mark, which has fallen to 2,000 to the £ and threatens to sink still further. The fall is doubtless due to some extent to the unsettlement caused by the murder of Rathenau, but the underlying reasons must be sought far deeper. If German finance were sound, the removal of one man, however prominent, could not have affected it to any considerable extent. It would be a very disconcerting idea to English people that the value of the £ was dependent upon the life of any one of the British statesmen.

There is an unfortunate tendency in the modern mind to explain occurrences solely in the light of the immediate cause, without troubling to search for the underlying trends. The financial condition of Germany to-day is appreciably worse by the death of Rathenau, but it was steadily worsening before that event. It must be considered in connection with the general onflow of depreciation in paper-money values that started in Russia and has steadily swept across Europe, threatening to engulf the industrial system of the world.

The collapse of Germany can hardly fail to have a serious effect upon the stability of the franc and the lira, and if these should seriously decline, the situation of the £ must give rise to anxiety.

A general glance at the financial world shows one highly industrialised country, America, with its head above water, England swimming strongly and stoutly against an adverse current, Italy, Belgium, and France being slowly carried away by the tide, on which Germany, Austria, and Poland are drifting out to sea, where Russia is sinking into the depths.

Reflection will show that the war did not introduce a new system of finance into Europe, but only carried Europe a good deal further forward upon the way on which it was



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travelling in pre-war days. Depreciation has followed upon a failure to balance budgets, excessive taxation, an increase of public debts, and an over-issue of notes by the central banks holding the national gold reserves.

The increasing difficulty of balancing budgets was a marked pre-war phenomenon. On the one hand, Germany used boldly to raise a new loan to meet the deficit. England achieved equilibrium more conservatively by constantly adding to the income tax and the death duties. The difficulty in other countries was met by a combination of these or parallel methods.

Government borrowings were increased alarmingly by the war, but even before the war the growth of public debts, both State and municipal, was very pronounced. Society found difficulty in functioning without constantly adding to the load of interest charges, a process the continuance of which must lead to bankruptcy. The creation of public debts was not due to the war, but was enormously accelerated thereby. The States and municipalities of Europe were becoming slowly saturated with public debt before the war. To-day they are super-saturated. Very few of them can meet their commitments. If nothing happens to release the financial pressure in the next few years, scarcely any of them will be able to pay their creditors, and partial or complete default must result. To meet the deficit, recourse must be had either to increased taxation, to loans, or to the most fatal remedy of all, increase of note issue. The taxation of European countries can, however, hardly be increased. Public sentiment everywhere demands reduction, and any Government that attempts to run counter to that sentiment is not likely to survive. Foreign loans are almost out of the question, as they could only be raised in New York or London, where they are no longer in favour. Internal loans meet with little response from the investor and compulsory levies are threatened. Every fresh loan or levy tends, moreover, to reduce the credit of the country in question and adversely affects the value of its currency. This in turn increases the cost of living, throws a further burden upon the public purse for all Government expenditure, and urges the country along the facile but dangerous path of turning out more paper money.



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Where, we may ask, is the process to stop? The onflow of depreciation has crossed the Vistula and the Carpathians, it has swept across Germany, it is filtering across the Rhine. Will it stop at the shores of the English Channel? Does an insular position afford protection against the operations of financial depreciation as against an invading host?

England must take stock of the situation, not as of an occurrence like the famine in Russia, painful but remote, not as of a local event affecting the lives and prosperity of a people across the Rhine, but as of an approaching tide of disaster that may in the course of the next few years jeopardise her own welfare.

England has a particular moral responsibility in the matter. She gave to the world its present financial system. She established the modern system of centralised finance. Her Free Trade Prime Minister, Peel, gave the final sanction to the establishment of a central bank of issue under Government charter which is a direct negation of the very principle of Free Trade. His example was followed throughout the world. The step from the central issue of paper money by a bank under Government charter to direct issue by the Government is a logical application of the theory of State control of finance. If that theory is a correct interpretation of financial science, the step should have ensured increased stability. It has not done so; on the contrary, it is leading Europe into a bottomless abyss. It is the excessive issue of notes by the European central banks that is causing the depreciation of national currencies.

The main results of Peel's theory are so plain that he that runs may read. Before his Act was passed the gold stores of England were held scattered in the various industrial towns, where they were of use to commerce. After the passing of the Act a gravitation towards the central bank manifested itself as an increasing current, with the ultimate result that to-day the whole of the gold of England is held in one bank. The passing of similar Acts in other countries had similar results. The attraction of the smaller gold store toward the larger became a pronounced feature of world-economics. But world-economics knows no national boundaries, either geographical or political, and it is not surprising to discover that even in pre-war days



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the national gold stores tended to concentrate in one country. Before the outbreak of war the central gold reserves of the U.S.A. were increasing at a greater rate than the European ones, and the acceleration of the system due to the war has intensified the movement.

This extraordinary centripetal tendency of gold is the most important manifestation of economics during the last century, and its consequential effects have been dealt with in a book * recently published by the present writer. One aspect of the problem can be indicated here. The credit of a country is intimately connected with its hold on gold. If Germany had sufficient gold to pay the demands upon it, the mark would not depreciate. But Germany's hold on gold is steadily lessening, and the slighter it becomes the more the mark will fall. Even if French politicians forgo their demands for gold marks for Reparation payments, the world's business men will prefer gold to paper. Russia has been reduced to the plight that she can only purchase goods from abroad by actual payment in gold, and the depreciation of the mark is hastening forward a similar situation with regard to Germany. The latter's gold store will then hasten across the Rhine. What, then, will be the position of Europe's western fringe? France and Britain both owe America a yearly toll of interest, which must be paid either in goods or in gold. Europe, unfortunately, is in greater need of America's goods than America is of Europe's. The recent increase in the American import tariffs shows an inclination to keep out European goods, and if those goods are excluded, the payment of interest on the war debt must be made largely in gold. The first instalment of £1,000,000 for that purpose has in fact already been shipped across the water. The pre-war tendency of gold to gravitate toward the largest gold store will then be largely increased, with a reflex action upon the whole structure of British and French credit. It must be left to the defenders of the system of centralised banks under Government charter or Government control to say what remedy they are prepared to propose other than the complete reversal of Peel's fundamental error in financial theory.

* *The Menace of Money Power.* (Cape).



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# Books

## ECONOMICS.

THE CONTROL AND DISTRIBUTION OF PRODUCTION. By C. H. DOUGLAS. Cecil Palmer. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

WHAT is called the Douglas scheme has been formally turned down by Labour, but in this new volume Major Douglas undoubtedly says many things that are not to be dismissed as if they were the mere panacea of a theorist. The crux of the problem is credit and the author hits the bull's-eye in his diagnosis that credit is entirely a producer's privilege, whereas what is wanted is the organisation of consumers' credit. The point is this. Is the capitalist system working well? It is not. For what we have is surplus production and a falling consumption power, and this, if continued, must lead to disaster. Now it is undeniable that credit is not given to the consumer, so much so that Europe's problem is this very condition of productive capacity without the necessary purchasing-power. This is what Major Douglas is hammering at, and though in his constructive plan there may be flaws, the diagnosis cannot



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be brushed aside. The problem, as he states it, remains. It is consumption. And there should be no reason why credit should not be its solution.

## FICTION.

THE JUDGE. By REBECCA WEST. Hutchinson and Co. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

AFTER the brilliance of her first novel, which seemed to lay foundation for a somewhat new form of the novel, one naturally read Miss Rebecca West's second venture with eagerness, but *The Judge* just fails where the slighter book succeeded, namely, in atmosphere. In *The Judge*, atmosphere is aimed at. We are in the grip of tragedy, of a fateful, brooding judgment mounting cumulatively to the inexorable end on classic lines. Conrad is master of this art, rare enough in English letters, and to succeed the tragedy must come from within. That is where Rebecca West just misses, perhaps because of the intellectuality of her composition. Her scene-painting, her descriptions, her presentations, are admirable, and on this plane the book even astonishes. The thing is too packed, or, as the French put it, too *cossu*. She lacks the touch of mysticism. We do not feel her people, as we do in *Wuthering Heights*, for instance; somehow, the illusion is chill. None the less, the novel stands out as a *tour de force*, which in a less gifted writer would be acclaimed with rapture.

CHARLES REX. By ETHEL M. DELL. Hutchinson and Co. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

ANOTHER book by this famous authoress is always entertaining; this time her hero is "lovely." Ethel Dell specialises in ugly men—Saltash is no exception. Of course, he owns yachts, racehorses, castles, men, women, and everything that Ouida's guardsmen ever owned, and he picks up a girl dressed as a boy whom he thrashes. But this is the Dell paint-box (her public enjoy a little sadism). The girl loves him. She grows into ravenous beauty. Saltash educates her, etc., etc., and of course, is the *preux chevalier* of virtue. Though they tread on tigers' skins all over the floor and their adventures are lurid, he is the charming millionaire, rake, and cynic that servant-maids dream of—at last they marry. Probably a hundred thousand people will read this old, old mixture with relish, nor is it bad technically, and no doubt this kind of a book helps democracy to bear its rheums and rheumatics in our insufferable climate.

THIS FREEDOM. By A. S. M. HUTCHINSON. Hodder and Stoughton. 7*s*. 6*d*.

MR. HUTCHINSON'S new novel was awaited with breathless excitement, so stupendous a success had he scored with his "case for man" wherein every father and husband seemed to sense a portrait. This time, woman is the theme, and where and just so long as the book deals with the blossoming of Rosalie, the new business woman who regards men as superior but animals and so repulsive, the thing delivers a message and one begins to wonder whether this woman hero will beat the record of the other book. But then winter comes. Mr. Hutchinson seems to have changed his mind and with it his style, which assumes cumbrous proportions and in places follows the German rules of prosody, and from that point the theme returns to his first subject, man. The woman



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almost ceases to interest. The business marriage turns out wrongly—the children do—and in the end we have a Shakespearian clearance, a postscript saving the book from the dreadful charge of pessimism by a glimpse of the baby doing its lessons "on mother's knees." So Mr. Hutchinson is not an iconoclast, after all. His portrait of the "free" woman is a trap, to show us how she fails, where and why, and the "close-up" is quite safe for fathers and mothers who at first may have got alarmed.

Mr. Hutchinson is a surface writer who might really write, if he took pains, for he has observation and appears in earnest, and he knows mankind. But this is quite second-rate stuff, and all the faults of the other book are stylistically accentuated, at times even resulting in gibberish. And then the tail. Perhaps Mr. Hutchinson took fright. At any rate, the first part is so much superior to the rest that speculation is legitimate as to why the obvious course was not followed and Rosalie justified. Rosalie deserved a whole book. She was delightfully pithy on man. It really is hard to think that if a mother reaches Lombard Street her children go to "Queer" Street. Mr. Hutchinson on women is poles apart from D. H. Lawrence; from an art point of view this book cannot be said to matter.

THE ALTAR STEPS. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. Cassell and Co., Ltd. *7s. 6d.* net.

MR. COMPTON MACKENZIE'S new book is "as interesting as a novel," indeed much more interesting than the great majority; but it is in very truth a guide book to Anglo-Catholicism—the adventures of a sweet-blooded, sincere and charming youth amongst the exquisite mysteries of ecclesiastical Christianity—a search for the Holy Grail by an up-to-date Galahad. The fact that this long and extraordinarily clever book begins quite in the dramatic form of romance will induce a great many readers to discover for the first time the secular beauty and sweet reasonableness of what they have regarded as an outworn survival, or a dying industry, and will furnish them with a comprehensive grasp of the Anglican situation, depolarised by the lucid and balanced presentation of a wonderful gallery of clerical and monastic figures. To those who care for none of these things these brilliantly realised bishops, priests, and deacons will come as a gallery of masterly portraits (old masterly some of them). Mark, the pilgrim of light, is delightfully level-headed and humorous-minded—a thoroughly natural and lovable boy who soon sees the silliness of his own over-eagerness and has a keen eye for inconsistency and discrepancy in his teachers, but with divine perseverance keeps on keeping on until he is at least in deacon's orders. How little we have suspected our Compton Mackenzie of all his ecclesiological lore or the sufficient and balanced method of great book-making he has brought to his theme, for this book—apart from one overstrained incident—is great in its subject and in its manner; but it won't be a best seller, and will perhaps be put upon the "index" both in Rome and Paternoster Row. Still, Mr. Mackenzie will have given us his "Hamlet."



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